Yu-Gi-Oh Arc-V Rewritten

Nitefroster

Yu-Gi-Oh! ARC-V | Complete

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Summary

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Description:

Before we start:
Warning: my rewrite focuses more heavily on the trauma/depressing themes of the show, so it isn’t nearly as light-

hearted as the actual show.
Every so often, there will be origins episodes for certain characters. They basically tell a characters' backstory, and will likely make you feel sad afterwards.
Now, for those of you who are reading this without knowing anything about Yugioh or have never seen the original show, all you need to know is that these characters "duel" with cards from the card game Yugioh. If certain scenes where they "summon" or say strange names don't make sense, it means they're dueling.
Also, all you really need to know if you've never seen the original show is that the protagonist is Yuya Sakaki. His father, Yusho, left him at a young age. Yuya and his best friend, Yuzu, go to a duel school where they learn about dueling. There is a rival duel school called LDS (Leo Duel School) that's rich and full of spoiled kids. It's run by the Leo Corporation, run by Reiji and Henrietta Akaba. Things start off relatively simple, but it gets complicated quickly, but I don't want to spoil anything.

1. Swing Into Action!

Season 1:
Ep 1: Swing Into Action!
Episode one starts with the explanation of the Solid Vision system, like in the Japanese version.
Instead of the scene of Gong and Yuya's duel, I would start with Yuya dreaming about his father. It shows flashes of scenes with Yusho, none of which you can decipher what's being said. Yuya wakes up, having fallen off of the bed, and thinks "not again." (This can be interpreted both as him being annoyed by falling off his bed, or at his dream. The way the scene is showed makes it seem as though he is upset at falling off the bed)
The camera pans in on his pendulum necklace.
Yuya pets his animals, slides down the pole, and goes to breakfast. (Yuya's house is so cool) We are introduced to his mother, Yoko, who is implied to have a passion for cooking. Yuya knows he's late to school, so he quickly eats bacon, eggs, toast, and pancakes before going to Paradise Prep School. (the reason why I'm making a big deal about breakfast is because I'm making fun of the trope where the protagonist is late and only takes a piece of toast)

On Yuya’s way to school, he helps an old lady cross the road. The show makes a point of showing how overly happy and helpful he is to strangers, (the strangers thank and praise him, which makes him happier) cracking jokes and having fun while at it, making him more late.

At this point, the audience is led to believe that Yuya is a very cheerful, hard-working, kind, goofy guy who just wants to make people happy.

At school, Yuya meets up with his childhood best friend, Yuzu Hiiragi. They have some friendly banter, and it is made clear that the two of them are a great duo. The bell rings, and they both head to class.

Yuzu is presented to the audience as being like Yuya, the only difference being that she is more in-tune with her feelings and can take things seriously.

In class, Yuya falls asleep and has a nightmare that recounts the events of Yusho abandoning him and his mother. A young Yuya is watching as Yoko and Yusho argue, and he walks out the door. He awakens in class, and puts his goggles over his eyes. Yuzu notices this, and seems to recognize this as one of Yuya’s coping mechanisms. The teacher sees this and takes his goggles off, and a cartoonish amount of tears come out. The class laughs at him.

Fast forward a bit, and school is over. Yuzu asks

Yuya if he's okay, and he acts surprised. She knows that he had a nightmare about Yusho again, and lectures him to stop pushing his feelings away. He nods, and feels a burst of motivation. Yuya wants to forget about his humiliation, and is excited to go to the Yusho Duel School.

At the Duel School, we are introduced to Syuzo Hiiragi, Yuzu's dad. He tells the audience how the school is barely hanging on financially, and is worried about the future of the school. Syuzo goes on to comment about how "since Yusho's disappearance, people have had a negative outlook on the school." This triggers a flashback for Yuya where he remembers when Yusho was supposed to duel the Sledgehammer, but never showed up. He remembers people yelling about how much of a coward his father was, and how people bullied him for it.

Yuzu snaps Yuya out of it, where he once again tells her that he's fine.

Syuzo continues showing Yuya and Yuzu around, where we see that there are only 20 other students.

Suddenly, we meet Nico Smiley, who offers Syuzo and Yuya something interesting: have Yuya duel the Sledgehammer (a pro sponsored by LDS) and become eligible to become a pro duelist. Nico tries to prey on Yuya's insecurities about his father to

convince him to accept, but Syuzo argues with Nico, telling him that he can't manipulate a child into a business deal. Nico then says, "what a shame. I was going to give your school free publicity and extra funding if you had accepted…" Nico starts to leave, but Yuya tells him he accepts. Syuzo and Yuzu are shocked. Nico smiles, and tells him that he will schedule his duel the day after tomorrow.

The episode ends with Yuya thinking about how he will be dueling against the man who was supposed to face his father. The audience understands how this means a lot to him.

2. Preperation

Ep 2: Preparation

The episode starts with the professor of Duel Academy telling Yuri to kidnap Yuzu Hiiragi, referring to her as “the final piece.” Yuri smiles evilly, which is meant to unsettle the audience.

Meanwhile, Yuya is doing all he can to learn about his opponent, and tries to practice dueling against Yuzu. Unfortunately, his nerves get the best of him and she beats him.

The whole episode, Yuya is putting on a smile and trying to act like he’s fine. However, later on, he goes to the bridge and puts his goggles over his eyes. The audience recognizes that this is definitely a coping mechanism, and is definitely crying. (You don’t hear crying)

A flashback of Yusho teaching Yuya to always put on a smile is played, and that’s where the whole pendulum thing is brought in. This is notably the first flashback of Yusho that’s positive. (The previous ones were either in a negative light, or just random flashes of his dad) This scene is meant to show the audience that Yuya is bottling up his emotions because of what his dad has taught him.

Furthermore, this is why he is always trying to be positive. He also is overly helpful with his peers, which is a symptom of abandonment issues. (I forgot to add scenes of this) He wants to help/please others and work hard so that he feels like he has a purpose, and so that they don't leave him behind.

The memory is interrupted by the debut of Gong, who tries to reassure Yuya that his hard work will pay off in his duel with the Sledgehammer. There is a flashback of Gong protecting Yuya from bullies as a child. As Gong gets up to leave, Yuya grabs his wrist and tells him not to leave. Yuya's temperament immediately changes, and he puts a smile on his face and declares that he will win the duel with the Sledgehammer.

The episode ends with two cloaked figures in an alleyway, debating on how to go about their objective. One is very clearly far more aggressive than the other, and is insisting on taking the president of the Leo Duel School by force, but the other one is arguing against it. He reassures the more aggressive one, saying, "Shay, I know you're going through a lot, but this isn't the way to go about this. You know that." The one now introduced as Shay holds his gaze, before shaking his head and apologizing. The more cautious one claims that he is on his side, and tells him not to forget that. Shay

asks the cautious one for a favor: if he were to do something reckless and out of control, he would stop him. The cautious one agrees, and they part ways dramatically. (I saw dramatically because of how dang fast Yuto is when he darts past Sora in the hospital in the actual show. They both do this)

3. The Power of Pendulum

Ep 3: The Power of Pendulum

The episode starts with Shay narrowing his eyes and staring at the LDS building. He sees a TV screen in the distance that has Nico Smiley on the screen, talking about the upcoming duel between the Sledgehammer and Yuya Sakaki. Shay's eyes widen, and he makes an angry face. Sakaki? He's here? That traitor! He thinks to himself. Shay looks at the screen again, showing an interview with the Sledgehammer. (With Arnold Schwarzenegger voice, of course) Nico asks the Sledgehammer how he feels about his upcoming duel, and he responds, "tch. I'm not worried! I wouldn't be surprised if that coward's son didn't show up! It would be like father like son!" Shay narrows his eyes. Got that right. Sakaki will forever be a coward. The audience is intended to wonder, "Sakaki? Is Shay talking about Yuya's dad? What did he do to this random guy who totally won't be plot relevant later…?

Yuya is seen again preparing for his duel. He and his duel school are already at the stadium, and he is being given one last encouragement by everyone. Yoko tells Yuya" I'm so proud of you! You're just

like your father! “This encouragement seems to make Yuya the happiest, at least compared to everyone else’s. (It should be noted that everyone else’s encouragement was more lengthy, too. For instance, everyone else’s speech goes along the lines of:” I know your dad put you through a lot, but now you’re here and are going to prove to everyone that you’re strong! Now go out there and show them your stuff! “)

The scene cuts to a screen in a dark room, where a man named Claude is seen addressing the guy as “Declan.” Next to him is a woman named Henrietta, with a small child named Riley. Notably, Henrietta and Riley refer to Declan as ‘Reiji’ instead of “Declan,” implying that Declan is a nickname and that Reiji is his real name. This also implies that Henrietta and Riley are related to Reiji, as they are close enough to him to call him his real name.

Claude comments about how Yuya is a “mediocre duelist at best,” and wonders why Declan had them gather here to watch. Reiji simply responds, “this is Yusho Sakaki’s son. If we’re going to get any leads, then his son is his best bet.” The audience is meant to interpret this scene as Reiji wanting to look for Yusho Sakaki. While this is technically correct, the audience doesn’t know Reiji’s relation to Yusho, nor do they know why he is looking for him. There is

more to it than just looking for Yusho, and this serves as a red herring. While Reiji is technically looking for leads on Yusho, this lead on Yusho will lead him to his leads on Leo Akaba.

The duel starts, with Nico Smiley being the announcer. The action field is prepared. However, Yuya is nowhere to be seen. His school gets worried, and they notice that the audience is criticizing this, and saying mean things about how “it seems the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.” Yuzu begins to stand up to shout at some people for making fun of Yuya, but her father holds her back. Nico makes the audience’s anger worse, by also making pointed comparisons between Yuya and Yusho. The Sledgehammer smiles evilly.

However, after five minutes have passed, Gong notices Yuya dressed as a clown creeping up behind the Sledgehammer. The audience in the show seem to notice too, and tell the Sledgehammer to “look behind.” The duel plays out pretty much identical to the duel in the anime, so I don’t really need to explain much else.

Then, the pivotal moment comes where Yuya’s cards magically and conveniently transform into Pendulum monsters that he conveniently knows how to use. The audience is torn by this, as half find it cool, and the other half is accusing him of cheating.

Meanwhile, Claude and Henrietta are watching in shock. (Reiji and Riley both watch with no expression whatsoever) Claude demands to know if the boy cheated, but Reiji says “no.” Henrietta questions how he can possibly say that, and Reiji responds, ‘because of this.’ He takes out a file out of a hiding place that says “Revival Zero,” (notably, the camera pans to a brief shot of the cover of the file, which has a picture of a young Yuri and later to be introduced Celina. The audience is supposed to wonder why the heck Yuri is on this page) and flips to a specific page. Claude and Henrietta gasp in shock. Riley finally looks up and says, “it… exists?” Reiji nods. “Yes. It’s called Pendulum summoning.” Reiji proceeds to explain, “the way Yuya played his cards is exactly like what is shown in the file…” before saying “something caused this summoning method to go extinct… So I find it rather convenient that Yusho’s son is the only one who knows how to do this…” The room falls silent.

The duel ends in Yuya’s victory, with some people cheering and some booing. Nico Smiley seems happy about it, and so does Yuya. His eyes start tearing up as he thinks about how he “restored his father’s image.” He goes over to his duel school, who congratulate him. Yoko comments again about how much Yuya is getting to be like Yusho, which

makes him smile. (Yes, I know he was already smiling but there is a notable difference in this smile)
Yuya notices Yuzu seems… sad. He asks her what's wrong, and she hugs him and says "I don't want your father's legacy to keep being a burden on you." Yuya looks at her with a confused look, and says, 'why would it be a burden? He's the best Dueltainer out there! If anything, I should be thanking him!' Yuzu nods, but clearly has resignation in her eyes. The audience is supposed to take note of how Yuya is the only one not acknowledging all the bad things Yusho put him through. The other characters seem to notice, and are trying to reassure him about it, (with the exception of Yoko, who is saying positive things about Yusho, but the audience doesn't know why yet) but Yuya is purposefully shutting their worries down, as he sees his father as this "perfect" being.
Not too far away, Claude says, "the file didn't say that the Pendulum cards did that!" Reiji stood up dramatically and said, 'there's no point in dwelling on that. We now know what the cards can do to some extent, but we still need more information' before leaving the room. "Claude, come with me. I need you to do something." Claude follows Declan wordlessly. Riley takes Henrietta's hand, and they leave together in silence.

Meanwhile, a random blonde boy is seen calling someone. He says, “So I just have to steal the Pendulum cards?” The voice says “if you fulfill this task, we will exchange them with you for the rare cards you want.” (The voice is Claude’s) The blonde boy smiles. He is seen throwing a dart at a poster of Yuya that lands on Yuya’s forehead.

4. Prove Yourself!

The episode starts with Henrietta and Riley in the backseat of a limo. Riley asks her, “will my brother be okay?” Henrietta coldly responds, ‘of course he will.’ She thinks to herself angrily, Reiji and I are one step closer to HIM. A flashback ensues of flashes of Leo Akaba with a young Reiji showing him around an office space. Viewers pick up on the fact that this was the man who ordered Yuri to kidnap Yuzu. She closes her hand tight around Riley’s hand, and says out loud, “justice will be served.” This scene not only confirms to the viewer that Riley is Reiji’s brother, but that Henrietta and Leo are their parents.

Meanwhile, at the duel school, a long line of duelists are coming into the school. It is implied that after Yuya’s duel, they want to join the school because of his Pendulum cards.

Yuya and Yuzu duel to demonstrate Pendulum summoning. It plays out exactly the same way as in the show, where he fails to do it and a lot of the crowd leaves and convinces themselves that Yuya is “a coward” and “a cheater.” The crowd runs over Syuzo comedically.

Yuya pulls his goggles over his eyes, but he is interrupted by three students. He looks up and sees them, and they are the only ones who want to apply. They encourage Yuya, and talk about how they know he didn't cheat, and that Pendulum summoning looked awesome. (The three students are Ally, Tate, and Fredrick) Yuya puts on a smile for the three of them, and celebrates the fact that they got new applicants.

Then, a montage is shown of Yuya dueling with Gong and trying over and over to Pendulum summon. (At the Duel School, which has closed by this point) Finally, after many hours he does it correctly, and he and Gong hug it out. Yuya collapses from exhaustion, and Gong carries him back to his house.

The next day, Yuya is sleeping in class due to being exhausted from staying up late Pendulum summoning. The scene plays out exactly the same as in the anime, except without Yuzu hitting him. The kids at the school still laugh at him.

As Yuzu and Yuya leave school, she worries that he is putting too much pressure on himself because of his father, but he dismisses her. Yuya once again defends his father, but before he can say more he is hit in the forehead with three suction cupped darts. Yuya looks up to see a blonde boy standing 10 feet

away, and he approaches him. Yuya is impressed by his aim, and the blonde boy claims that “I could’ve done it blindfolded.” He then says, ‘but enough about me, I’ve come to find you.’ He introduces himself as Sylvio Sawatari, and claims that he became a fan after watching the Sledgehammer duel and says, “I know you didn’t cheat! Your summoning was incredible!” Sylvio expresses interest in Pendulum summoning, but Yuzu is suspicious of him. She tries to encourage Yuya to show the trio of kids Pendulum Summoning instead, but Sylvio claims that he can “show them at the Center Court at LDS.” Yuya is shocked that he was able to make such a reservation, and Sylvio explains that he is an elite duelist at LDS and that his father is going to become the mayor of Paradise City in the upcoming election. The children seem excited to go, but Yuzu is still unconvinced. She feels like they could’ve done it at her school, and seems to harbor negative feelings toward LDS.

Sylvio shows the students the LDS school, where the trio of kids look on in amazement. Sylvio flaunts the school’s qualities, with its good reputation and expensive technology. The kids comment about how much better LDS is than Yusho Duel School, to which Sylvio praises them on. Yuzu gets angry and shouts at him, but Fredreck stops her.

Basically, what follows is completely the same as the anime: Sylvio steals Yuya's Pendulum cards and forces him to duel with a crappy deck. However, I decided to change one thing. I had Sylvio steal Yuya's pendulum necklace as well, which makes him break down. A flashback where Yuya is crying from losing his pendulum necklace ensues, and his mother is desperately comforting him. (This scene takes place shortly after Yusho's abandonment) Yuya cries that "now all of him is gone" before Yoko hugs him.

Yuzu hugs Yuya to snap him out of it, and then the duel begins. A few other differences to note here: Yuzu and the kids aren't in danger, Sylvio is dueling with a deck that isn't his own, (his real deck is monarchs) and for the rest of the show, the action cards are all random. (As in, some action cards are good and others are bad)

The events following are the same: Yuya wins and puts on a show, Sora comes in and knocks Sylvio out, and Reiji stops Claude from intervening. Most of this episode actually followed the anime. (Oh, and Yuya gets his pendant back)

5. A New Friend?

In a dream sequence, we as the audience see a young Reiji looking on in horror at Leo and Henrietta arguing with each other. Their shouting is deafening, objects get thrown to the floor, and Reiji cries at hearing his mother begging to stay for him. Leo offers no explanation for why he is leaving, and willingly leaves his company behind in his wife's hands. Afterwards, Henrietta is seen trashing Leo's room, and renaming the corporation and school as LDS instead of the Leo Institute, out of not wanting to hear her husband's name again.

Reiji wakes up in a cold sweat, with a scared expression on his face. This doesn't last, though, and his expression immediately turns to anger. Take note, that this is the most emotion the audience has seen from Reiji so far, and he doesn't even say anything! It is implied that he has Misophonia, and that his parents' yelling rings in his nightmares that seem to happen frequently. It is also implied that he has a rather cold relationship with his mother, despite her being on his side.

It is also notable that Reiji is lying on the couch in his office; a dark, depressing room with the TV still

flickering and the Revival Zero file poking out of its hiding spot. This is where Reiji works and lives, and it seems to be a rather sad life he lives; tied to revenge against his father. This shows that Reiji is both so similar yet so different to Yuya.

Yuya wakes up to find Sora at his house, which understandably weirds him out. Yoko seems to like Sora, much to Yuya's annoyance.

Sora asks Yuya to be his teacher, to which Yuya says "no." Sora keeps asking Yuya, which starts to bother him. Even at school, Sora asks him, and even spies on him throughout the day. (To save us all I deleted the scene where Yuzu hits Yuya)

At Yusho Duel School, Yuya expresses his annoyance to Sora stalking him. Syuzo, however, tells Yuya that he should consider being Sora's mentor, so that he can convince Sora to join this school. Sora decides to challenge Yuya to a duel to see the Pendulum summonings up close. Yuya agrees, and a bet is settled: if Yuya wins, Sora stops stalking him and joins the Yusho school, and if Sora wins, Yuya becomes his teacher and must put up with being followed.

Of course, the duel happens the exact same way as in the anime with the same result. Sora declares that he is now Yuya's friend and enrolls in Yusho, which makes Syuzo happy and he declares that he can now

pay the electric bill. Yuya asks Sora how he learned to Fusion summon since he hadn't enrolled in LDS, but Sora brushes off the question and changes the subject to Yuzu. Sora teases Yuya for liking her, which he denies immediately, while blushing. Yuya is annoyed that Sora is talking about something like this, but Sora claims that it's what friends talk about. Meanwhile, Sylvio is seen with his father at his nice, rich mansion. His father, Furio, tries to reassure his son that he will do better in future duels, but Sylvio swears to get revenge on Yuya. Furio promises that he will get Sylvio the crystalized pendant he always wanted. Sylvio's eyes start to water and he thanks his father, and they hug. The camera pans out on a picture frame that shows Sylvio, his father, and his implied late mother who is seen wearing a crystalized pendant. Aside from the not so subtle implication of Sylvio's mother being dead, it is interesting to note that this is the first time the audience has seen Sylvio not act like a jerk. (Genuinely, I mean. When he is first introduced, he's purposefully being manipulative, but this is the first time his good feelings are genuine) This marks the beginning of an interesting story for Sylvio.

6. The Journey to Enlightenment

I’m just going to say that this episode hardly has any changes to its anime counterpart, because it truly doesn’t need much fixing. It’s that good of an episode. It also just marks the turning point for many things…

Fast forward to the good part! As one of Sylvio’s cronies gets knocked out, Yuzu and Sylvio look in shock to see a cloaked figure enter the warehouse. Sylvio demands to know who the masked figure is, but he ignores Sylvio, his eyes locked on his LDS badge. All he says is, “back down. This isn’t your duel to fight.” He seems to be talking to Yuzu, who is bewildered. “I would say the same to you! I need to duel him!” She says, trying to continue her objective. He suddenly reveals his duel disk, which is notably not one that Yuzu or Sylvio recognizes. For a split second Yuzu gets scared that the cloaked figure is going to force her out of the duel with aggression, based on his posture and rugged exterior. However, much to Yuzu’s shock, he puts an arm protectively in front of her, and says, “I don’t want to see you hurt again” in an oddly soft, gentle tone.

Yuzu is surprised, not just by his words, but by how genuine and… nice he sounded. She backs off, thinking to herself, it might be better if I sit this one out, just to watch him duel… Who is he?

Sylvio mocks the masked duelist, and says, “alright, if you’re dueling me, then I have a condition: if I win, you must reveal your identity.” The masked duelist says nothing, which Sylvio takes as him agreeing.

The duel starts, and Sylvio and Yuzu immediately notice that something feels off… and as the duel continues, Sylvio activates Blizzard Destruction, where both Sylvio and Yuzu think how strange it is that they can feel the cold. The masked figure gets in front of Yuzu and uses his cape to protect her from the cold. Yuzu thinks, how can I feel this? Not even the virtual reality system makes you feel these kinds of things! Is this guy the reason why things are like this? She starts to feel dread for Sylvio, as she realizes that this cloaked figure seems to have been trained for battle. And… if this guy can make you feel things from the cards, then Sylvio is in for a whole world of hurt!

As the duel continues, the masked figure claims that “I thought you would put up more of a fight… You have no passion in your play. I do not feel the sharpness of a blade or the power of a bullet in your

dueling.” This enrages Sylvio, but he taunts him for being backed into a corner. The masked figure then says, ‘there won’t be a next turn’ and builds the overlay network. Sylvio asks, “how do you know how to XYZ summon? You’re not from here!” The masked duelist ignores this, and says, “Yet you are from here, where you are taught all the summoning methods, but are foolish enough to brag about your limited strength? How lucky you are… You wouldn’t last a minute where I’m from.”

Suddenly, a monster rises from the ground. It is cloaked and hard to see at first, and Sylvio asks, “what is that?” He didn’t want to admit it, but he was getting a little nervous. The cloaked figure says, “it is like me; cloaked in shadows, and relentless in its objective! I call upon the most dangerous of dragons: Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon!”

Later on, the masked duelist attacks, which sends Sylvio and a bunch of debris flying. The masked duelist protects Yuzu once again, but a small rock cracks his goggles. It is later shown that Sylvio almost got stabbed by Phantom Knights’ Spear, and his jacket is pinned to the wall. The masked duelist approaches Sylvio, holding the LDS badge in his hand and demands what he knows about Duel Academy. Yuzu thinks, what? Duel Academy? I’ve never heard of such a place! The masked figure

quickly observes that Sylvio doesn't know what he is talking about, and he begins to walk away. However, Sylvio wants to continue the duel, because of course he does.

After Sylvio activates Ice Rage, he taunts the masked duelist and claims that he will win after all. The masked duelist turns around and activates Phantom Knights' Spear's effect from the graveyard: it can negate the activation of a trap and deal 100 points of damage when banished. Sylvio only has 100 points left, and he starts to panic, knowing full well that the impact will be real and begs for the duelist to show mercy. The masked duelist angrily responds, "people like you deserve to experience the rage and sorrow of the battlefield. I hope you have nightmares about this moment until the day you decide to learn to respect others." With this, the Phantom Knights' Spear sends Sylvio hurtling into the hard, concrete wall behind him, and pins him by his jacket, proving that the masked duelist did show mercy.

The duelist then says, "and to help set you on your journey, I will offer you what you asked for…" With this, the duelist tore his mask off. A small fire that was started by the damage from the duel illuminates the room, just enough for Yuzu and Sylvio to gasp in shock. 'Yuya…?' Sylvio asks, and passes out. Yuzu

thinks, his face! The goggles… It's Yuya, but how? Why was he acting so different? Yuzu approaches the duelist, and says "Yuya? How did you get here so fast?" Before the duelist can respond, a light shines from Yuzu's bracelet and the duelist vanishes. "What?" Yuzu shouts, wondering why this is happening.

Suddenly, Yuya arrives at the warehouse, and Yuzu asks "how did you get here? Weren't you just here?" Confused, Yuya tells her that he came to look for her after hearing what Ally told him. This leaves Yuzu even more confused. "You… really are Yuya, aren't you?" Yuya nods, with confusion in his eyes. Then… Who was he? Yuzu wonders.

Meanwhile, the formerly masked duelist is teleported into a random alleyway where he just so happens to be where Shay is. He collapses, feeling his energy suddenly drained. Shay runs to him and catches the former duelist's fall, holding him in his arms. "You almost fell backwards. Are you alright? Did an LDS student do this to you? I swear I'll avenge you!" The cloaked duelist responds, "no, I'm alright… But Shay, I found her…" Shay's eyes widened. "You found her? What happened?" The cloaked duelist stood up on shaky legs with Shay's help.

'Your sister… She was in a warehouse trying to duel

an LDS student. I dueled in her place, but she didn't recognize me. She… thought I was someone else. She called me… Yuya.' The cloaked figure told Shay, with a somber tone to his voice. "Why… didn't she recognize you? She would know you immediately… You know how much she loves you." Shay asked softly. "I don't know." The cloaked figure admitted. His expression, which was usually either non-existant or full of anger, was full of sadness; heartbroken, even. He couldn't help but wonder if something happened to her memory, which only made him feel worse. The thought of her not remembering me is… The cloaked duelist put his goggles back on as his vision grew blurry.

Shay, who was normally so hostile and uncaring nowadays, held onto the cloaked duelist tenderly. "You found her, that's what matters. We'll figure something out." The duelist nodded slowly, and asked, 'when were you the optimistic one?' Shay just said, "this is the first lead we've had in months! Even I have to be excited about that." The cloaked duelist smiled, which relieved Shay a little. He had smiled before to calm him down, but this was the first real smile he had seen on his best friend's face in a long time. "We're going to find her, Yuto. I swear on my life."

7. Truth and Lies

Henrietta and Reiji meet up in a brightly lit room in the LDS tower. He informs Henrietta of the news: “Sylvio Sawatari was found injured in a warehouse. Video cameras near the warehouse caught that the injuries were caused by a duelist.” Henrietta narrowed her eyes. ‘Do we know anything about this duelist?’ Reiji shook his head. “He seemed to look like Yuya Sakaki, and…” Henrietta interrupted him, her face full of anger. “Yuya attacked him? We need to take away his pro license immediately! Ban him from dueling! Shut down that broke duel school of his! How dare he do such a thing to an LDS student?” Reiji said nothing, and stared at her blankly. “Mother.” Henrietta stopped after hearing that. She hadn’t heard Reiji address her like that in a long time. “I think we both know that we can’t do any of that to Yuya. It would be in our benefit to watch how he duels and get all the information we need from Pendulum Summoning. Furthermore, you didn’t let me finish.”

Henrietta composed herself and nodded. “Alright, I’m listening.” This invoked a small frown from Reiji, that did not go unnoticed, but he continued ‘I

know that this boy isn't Yuya, because we picked up XYZ energy… and it was far stronger than that of an XYZ summon taught here… "Henrietta's eyes widened." What's an XYZ duelist doing here? I thought they were all dead!' Reiji shook his head, and showed Henrietta the Revival Zero file again, and flipped to a specific page. Reiji pointed to a page that had two duelists' pictures on them. Henrietta read the names out loud. "Yuto Ikari and Ruri Obsidian. Piece Z#2 and piece R#2 respectively."

Reiji calmly said, "this is proof that there are survivors among the XYZ users. Why else would he want them so badly?" Henrietta nodded. 'That makes sense… So, if they're not the enemy, then what do we do about them attacking our students?' Reiji turned to the TV screen, which had gone to static. "We wait and see what their objective is. Best case scenario, we have common interests and can help each other. Worse case scenario, we have more enemies… I believe that the former is more likely than the latter, but we'll see."

Meanwhile, Sylvio is recovering from his injuries in the hospital. They weren't as bad as they could've been, considering he could've been stabbed and bled to death, but he did hit the concrete wall with great force from Dark Rebellion's blast. Sylvio believes

that Yuya was the one who did this to him, and is more vengeful than ever. Still thinking about the fight with the cloaked duelist over and over again, he recounts what he remembers. That jerk! What right does Yuya have to preach his beliefs onto me? What does he mean, that “I deserve the pain in the battlefield?” That he’s set me on “the path of respect?” For goodness sake, I am Sylvio Sawatari; son of the future mayor and an elite duelist! If anything, Yuya should be answering to me! He will pay! Sylvio thinks bitterly.

Henrietta and Claude visit him, along with his father. Furio shouts angrily at strangers, demanding to know who injured his son, or if they saw anything suspicious. Henrietta tells Furio to focus on his campaign, and leave the mystery to LDS. She thinks to herself, sorry Reiji, but I have to do this my way in a dry tone, clearly not remorseful at all.

Meanwhile, Syuzo is giving a lecture on Fusion and Synchro summoning to the students. Yuya notices that Yuzu doesn’t seem to be as upbeat as she normally is. However, he brushes it off as he and Sora eat in class and mix their food up, which makes the unnamed background students disgusted. Yuzu suddenly asks her father, “do you know how to XYZ summon?” Syuzo simply says, “no. In fact, LDS only recently implemented that program to their

school. How do you know about it?” Yuya looks at Yuzu with confusion. She dodges the question, and wonders, based on Yuya’s reaction, then it couldn’t have been him. He doesn’t know XYZ summoning.
Gong yells at everyone to come outside, and they do. Yuya, Yuzu, and Syuzo are face to face with Sylvio! He accuses Yuya of being the one who injured him, and says, “Yuzu was there, she saw him do it!” Yuzu doesn’t respond, as she herself doesn’t even know if it was Yuya or not. Ally, Tate, and Fredrick defend Yuya, by saying ‘you were going to attack him first! Yuzu was just trying to help Yuya out!’ Syuzo gets angry and accuses Yuzu of being associated with such a crime, which horrifies her. Sylvio tells Yuya that “I will see to it that you will be punished for what you’ve done! Best case scenario, you won’t ever duel again! Worst case scenario… You get locked up for attempted murder!” He laughs evilly, prompting the cliche “you can’t do this” from Yuya, where he continues to protest and say “you must be lying! Or I’m getting framed!” He turns to Yuzu and asks her if she really believes in what Sylvio is saying, but she doesn’t respond. Yuya becomes even more worried at her silence. Syuzo demands his daughter tell him what happened.
Before Yuzu can say anything, Henrietta and Claude

pull up in a limo and tell Yuya, Yuzu, and the gang to get in. They follow, and she introduces herself.
The car pulls up to the LDS tower. Once they settle in a room, Henrietta immediately accuses Yuya of attacking Sylvio. His friends defend him, and after some hesitation, Yuzu joins him. Henrietta knows that an elite member of the school losing to a small, poor school like the Yusho Duel school would harm the school's reputation if this event came to light, which makes her realize that she can't take legal action to punish Yuya. She suddenly proposes the idea to them of three of her students vs three of their students. If they win the majority, then the case will be dropped and Yuya will get away innocent. If they lose, then the LDS will see to it that the Yusho Duel School be shut down forever. The Yusho students are horrified to hear this, (except Sora, who simply smiles) but they know they have no choice.
Syuzo accuses Henrietta of coming up with this as some sort of elaborate scheme to shut down their school, which she denies by saying, "no, this has all been a marvelous coincidence. As an LDS member, I have to adapt to every challenge in my way. That's just how our corporation operates." She admits that while it is all a coincidence, it would benefit the school as she plans on setting up a Pendulum Summoning curriculum. Syuzo argues and tells her

“we have the only person in the world who can do this! No way we’re letting you steal his techniques without his permission!” Henrietta just smiles at this.
Yuya finally speaks up and tells Henrietta, “my father built this duel school with his own hands, made the curriculum, and did his best to teach everyone dueltaining! I am not about to let you or your corporation take away his legacy!” He says this while clutching his pendulum necklace. He notices Henrietta’s face change slightly. By mentioning his father’s name, she seemed to look slightly angrier. This angers Yuya more. ‘Why does everybody hate him? All he’s done is make people smile and have fun! Yet this is how he is repaid? With the people he used to call an audience calling him a coward, those closest to him silently resent him leaving, and now your cooperation is erasing his memory!’ Yuzu and Syuzo are taken aback by Yuya’s outburst, particularly the part referring to them. I don’t resent Yusho… Yuzu thinks, but all she can say is “Yuya…”
Henrietta ignores the outburst and asks “so it’s a deal?” Syuzo gulps and nods, and they shake on it, with Henrietta gripping his arm so tight it hurts. With her hand tightly around his, she leans in close to his ear and whispers menacingly, ‘Yusho is dead.’

Shocked, Syuzo stands there awkwardly, and Henrietta walks back to where she was. “I will give you an hour to choose your duelists. I have already chosen mine. Claude will escort you down to the dueling arena.”

Syuzo and the kids decide that Yuya, Yuzu, and Gong should duel, which makes Sora upset. He had been looking forward to dueling the LDS, but Yuya reassures him that he’s still a strong duelist. I’m stronger than you realize. Sora thinks with a smile on his face, as he eats a lollipop.

At the LDS dueling arena, Syuzo has a nervous look on his face that makes Yuya worried. He tries to brush it off when Yuya asks, but he is obviously nervous about what Henrietta told him. After all, not only did Syuzo and Yusho used to be friends, he couldn’t help but wonder what Yuya would do after hearing this information. I need to tell him… Not yet, but I will.

The duel between Yuya and Dipper O’rion begins. Ally, Tate, and Fredrick realize that Dipper is more than qualified for the upcoming Arc League Championship, and is one of the top students in his division at LDS.

Meanwhile, the camera pans to an alleyway, where a flaming bird seems to be causing mass destruction. The surrounding area is set ablaze, and debris goes

flying, leaving dents in the walls. The audience soon realizes that the duelist controlling the bird and causing physical damage is none other than Shay, Yuto's companion. This shows to the audience that they both possess a strange ability to make dueling actually hurt. In this scene, Shay has a mask and sunglasses on, probably to protect himself from his own harsh dueling. The camera pans over to what appears to be an LDS professor, and the name tag reads "Prof. Marco, Fusion Summoning teacher at LDS." Marco seems to be injured by the duel, and is looking on in horror at the destruction around him.

"I activate Raidraptor Blaze Falcon's effect! I use an overlay unit to destroy all of your monsters!" Shay declares. Marco's two monsters get destroyed, leaving him with 100 life points left. He begs for mercy, but his cries fall on deaf ears, as Shay calls out his falcon to attack; its screeches being the last thing that Marco ever hears. As the falcon's talon's tear through Marco's flesh, the duel ends.

Despite this, Shay keeps his duel disk on and ready, and approaches Marco laying on the ground. "What… What are you doing?" Marco asks, but again, he gets no reply. Shay presses something on his duel disk, and suddenly, Marco evaporates in a beam of purple light. Shay looks at the ground, and picks up what appears to be a card, and walks away

from the scene. This moment is meant to shock the audience, not only with its brutality, but because of the fact that Shay has the ability to card people. It is also meant to leave the viewer disturbed by the fact that Shay was able to carry out such a horrible act so nonchalantly, as if to imply that he’s done this a million times. Heck, he’s known for his anger, but in this scene he shows no emotion whatsoever. This should make you wonder, what caused Shay to resort to such brutal methods?

8. Crystal Clear

The episode begins with Reiji watching a screen on his expensive, massive computer screen. He appears to be watching his mother talking with the Yusho Duel School about the proposition. He closes his eyes. Of course, I'm not surprised that she didn't follow orders. It's a shame, but it's no big deal. She is acting in our interests, and at least she didn't take legal action. I will intervene if needed.

Meanwhile, the duel ends in Yuya's victory. Syuzo cheers, as he is happy that his school has a fighting chance. Gong and the gang hug Yuya tight, and he says "I've never been happier except on my birthday!" Henrietta is angry, but tries to compose herself. She scolds Dipper for his loss, and makes a phone call afterwards.

Yuzu goes to congratulate Yuya. He asks her if she's alright, as he's noticed that she's seemed off. She once again tells Yuya that she saw a guy that looked just like him, and that's what confused her. Yuya tells Yuzu that she knows this is the real him, and that he wouldn't do something like that to Sylvio. She nods and smiles at him. He smiles, and says, "I just don't want to see you hurt." This causes Yuzu to

remember that the cloaked duelist had told her the same thing, which makes her doubt Yuya for a second, but she tries to convince herself that Yuya is right. The audience will notice that Yuya and Yuto's words are similar to the sentiment Yuzu says to Yuya in regards to Yusho.

Yuzu tries to tell Yuya that she doesn't resent Yusho for leaving, and that she only talks negatively about him because she cares for his well-being. Yuya puts on a smile and says "I'm sorry about the outburst. Forget what I said, everything's fine." Yuzu nods again, but doubts his words. Why am I doubting everything about Yuya right now? She wonders.

Suddenly, Henrietta introduces her next duelist, Masumi Krystal, a Fusion user. Sora thinks to himself, finally someone interesting as he munches on some pocky. The audience recognizes that what Sora finds "interesting" about Masumi is that she is a fellow Fusion user. At this point in the show, not many Fusion users have been revealed yet.

Yuzu knows that this is her opponent. She observes how graceful and pure Masumi looks, while also having an air of confidence and skill. Yuzu tries to keep her mind on her duel, but she can't help but visualize the cloaked duelist's face when she looks back at Yuya. Masumi asks, "which of you losers are going to take me on?" Insulted, Yuzu steps up and

says, ‘you’ll be sorry for saying that!’ Masumi’s eyes widen a little, but then she starts to chuckle. “What’s so funny?” Yuzu asks. “Nothing. You’re cute, that’s all.” Masumi says. Yuzu’s face goes red. Cute? What? Is she mocking me? “I’ll show you what isn’t cute! My dueling!” Yuzu says, but then immediately regrets it as she realizes how awkward that sounded. Masumi smiles. Syuzo chooses the crystal corridor dueling field, and says “this will be a great place for my daughter to shine in! Do your best, sweetie!” Yuzu gets even more embarrassed, and chooses to just focus on the duel. Focusing on anything else, like my dad, Masumi, Yuya, everything happening all around me… It’s too much! I just need to duel!

Masumi says, “I can see it in your eyes.” Yuzu gets scared for a second. ‘What?’ She asks. “You’re overwhelmed by outside forces beyond your control. Your shine has been dulled by being confined to these walls. You won’t win unless you get it back.” Yuzu, flustered and overwhelmed, combined with feeling patronized and wondering how Masumi reads her so well, angrily responds, “what do you know about me?” Masumi replies, “my father is a jeweler, so I’ve seen many gems over the years. I’ve learned to observe which have a true shine and which don’t.” This makes Yuzu angrier, and the duel

finally begins.
I’m not gonna talk about each move, but I will mention that Sora is observing it much more closely than in other duels he’s seen. He makes vague comments about Fusion summoning that confuses Yuya, and he continues to eat his pocky. It should also be noted that Sora seems to be taking more interest in Yuzu. Previously, the two were only acquaintances through Yuya, but now he is beginning to admire Yuzu’s bravery against a Fusion user. (Of course, the audience and Yuzu are unaware of why Sora thinks this)
Yuzu, still feeling overwhelmed, starts seeing the cloaked duelist in the reflection of the pillars. This rattles her, and Masumi says, “eyes playing tricks on you, dear?” Yuzu asks, ‘you can see him?’ Masumi shakes her head and says, “no, but now I know that you can.” Yuzu blushed in embarrassment. I’m so off my game lately! How could I walk into such an obvious trap?
As Master Diamond attacks a second time, Yuzu spots an action card near a pillar. Knowing it is her last hope, she takes a risk and dives toward it, with her hand outstretched. Unfortunately, once she tries to grab it, she does not feel the card in her hand. Horrified, Yuzu looks toward the pillar behind her, and realizes that the card was there all along. It was

a reflection! She realizes too late, and Master Diamond's attack reaches her, causing her to lose the duel. Syuzo starts crying, and Yuzu's friends get worried. Masumi says, "it was a pleasure to meet you. See me again when you have things sorted out" before walking off. Henrietta congratulates her on her victory, which makes Dipper hide in the corner miserably.

Yuya goes to comfort Yuzu, but when she looks at him, she sees the cloaked duelist's face. She hugs Yuya, and thinks, no, that's not right. This is Yuya. He's here… Masumi was right. My shine was clouded by outside forces and I wasn't focused enough. I could've won had I just been stronger… Yuzu suddenly hears a voice say, "that's quite the show you're putting on." She's horrified to see Masumi watching her hugging Yuya, so she pushes him off. 'I thought you would be done with me, now that I've lost!' Yuzu retorts. Masumi shakes her head. "Of course not. Your shine might have been dulled, but a dulled crystal is still special among rocks." She then walks off. I don't know how to feel about Masumi… She's so strange, and I can't tell if she's being genuine or not… It would just be better if I never saw her again. Not only does she remind me of my failure, but I have enough vagueness and mystery in my life.

Gong prepares for his duel, and Yuya cheers for him, which brings tears to Gong's eyes. "I will avenge Yuzu!" Gong shouts. He faces his opponent, Kit Blade, a fellow Synchro user. Sora comments on the comedic height difference between the two, which makes Kit mad and he threatens Sora with his stick. The duel then begins.

Meanwhile, at an unknown location, the camera pans in on a person in a robe. The person is sneaking into a room, and looking through files. The person finds a file titled "Revival Zero." The audience will recognize that this file is the same as the one Reiji has. The person gasps, as they see their name and face on the cover. The shock of the moment leads to the person accidently dropping it, which causes a louder thud than they imagined. There must be a lot in this!

Suddenly, the robed figure hears footsteps sounding near the dark room, and they run, carefully putting the file in their side bag. They think to themself, now I will finally learn the truth! Obviously, the audience doesn't know who this is yet, but some clever viewers may deduce that it is either the boy or the girl shown on the cover. The person's pronouns were left as they/them intentionally so you don't know which one it is, but it certainly gives insight into the fact that there is more than one file. After

all, if there was only one copy, then what good would it be if it got stolen? That also begs the question of why people aren't hiding the file better, but whatever, that's not important. The point is, what "truth," could be hiding? Reiji already revealed that a small amount of info on Pendulum summoning existed, and pictures of Yuto and a girl named Ruri were in there, but what else could there be?

9. Stalemate

The episode starts with a guy with purple hair walking through what looks like the middle of nowhere at night time. Observant viewers will point out that this is the boy on the cover of the Revival Zero file, making them realize that the girl was the one who stole the file in the previous episode. They might also remember that this was the guy tasked by Leo Akaba (the audience doesn't know his name yet) to kidnap Yuzu Hiiragi. The purple haired boy appears to have a purple officer styled uniform, and a duel disk shaped like a sword. He suddenly hears movement in the distance, and he prepares to duel.
A group of random one-off characters appear, all of which seem to be on a camping trip. The purple haired boy finds them annoying, so he takes his duel disk out and presses it. The camera turns to the direction of the trees, where a purple light is reflected, as it is dark. The screaming of what is assumed to be the campers is soon heard, along with a roar. Five cards go flying in the direction of the trees, and the audience gets a clear view of the horrified looks on the poor campers faces inside the cards. This entire scene, the boy says nothing, nor

expresses any emotion, yet it invokes a strong emotion in the viewer. That emotion being: fear.
Meanwhile, Gong duels Kit Blade. This duel takes up most of the episode, so that's why this episode looks so short in script form. Anyway, it ends with a draw, which leaves Yuya and his friends confused. They agreed on whoever won the majority of duels, but they were at a stand still. Gong feels bad for not winning, but Yuya encourages him; if he hadn't drawn, he might've lost! After all, he did his best.
Syuzo tells Henrietta that "since we have a draw, you can't shut down our school!" Henrietta scowls and demands one more duel between the winners, i.e Yuya and Masumi. However, before they can continue, a voice behind everyone says 'wait.' They turn around, and see Reiji approach Yuya with his hood up. "I'll duel Yuya." Reiji says calmly, which leads to a dramatic stare down between the two.
Meanwhile, Yuto is seen walking along an alleyway, when he smells smoke. He runs toward the area, and sees what he feared; fire, dents in the walls, debris, dust, scratch marks… And even worse, he sees two cards on the ground, with the faces of two men screaming in fear. Yuto picks up the cards and dusts them gently. Shay… This isn't how we fight. You swore that you would stop carding people… That is the way of the enemy; if we start ruthlessly carding

people instead of fighting for a rebellion, then we are just as bad. Yuto stuck the cards in a secret compartment in his cape, and took one final look at the destruction. Shay, if you’re not careful, people will catch on… Then you’ll make even more enemies than just the one we’re rebelling against…

10. Defending Yusho

Yoko is seen in her house having nightmares about Yusho abandoning her. She hears the crying of Yuya, her husband yelling at her, and the slamming of the door as she pleads with him to stay. When Yoko wakes up, she remembers that she is free. Her eyes narrowed at a picture of her, Yusho, and Yuya on the table. The day that man left was when I was finally freed… I just wish Yuya could understand. I wish I could tell him why his father shouldn't be idolized as a hero, but I can't stand to see the sad look on his face. Yusho means so much to him, even after all these years. Yuya carries a hole in his heart from Yusho's abandonment… No, I can't even finish that… There's so much I wish I could say! Yoko thought angrily, and the camera pans to outside the Sakaki's house, where the sound of glass breaking is heard. The audience is meant to assume that Yoko broke the last picture of her and her family.

Meanwhile, the duel between Yuya and Reiji begins. Yuya's friends are understandably worried, as all the pressure is on him to save the school from being shut down. Plus, they know full well of Declan's reputation. They know he's more than qualified for

being in the tournament, and is a known pro duelist. (but he spends far more time with his company business than dueling)

At one point in the duel, Reiji questions why Yuya is trying so hard to defend his school, when it's on the brink of being run down anyway. Yuya once again mentions his father's legacy and the lessons that were taught, which triggers Reiji. Reiji has a flashback of his father leaving him and Henrietta behind, and at the end, it shows Yusho next to his father. This makes the audience realize that Yusho had something to do with Reiji's dad abandoning him.

Reiji immediately loses his normal composure and tells Yuya that Yusho is "nothing but a fake, manipulative person who leaves people behind when people need him most." When Yuya tries to protest, saying, 'I'm sure he had his reasons' Reiji cuts him off, telling him how similar the two of them are. "Yusho Sakaki hurt us both, and our lives have never been the same since he left us… However, our lives have also never been better." Reiji says. Yuya continues to push away Declan's criticisms. It is interesting to note how both Yuya and Reiji have the same stubbornness in their beliefs toward Yusho: they are both immediately triggered when someone challenges their viewpoint of him, and constantly try

to interrupt the other person from taking away from their “moment.” Yuya finally gets to encounter someone just as stubborn as he is.

Reiji then surprises Yuya by proposing the idea of having him join a group of duelists in the ultimate mission. Yuya responds, “what? Why are you asking me this?” Reiji admits that despite their differences, Yuya is a ‘worthy’ opponent and candidate for his team. He purposefully doesn’t tell Yuya what they will be doing, and only says, “this team is going to be led by me, where only the top youth students will make it. Lucky for you, I consider you worthy enough without having to go through the test.” Yuya then says, “I don’t know what you’re talking about, and thanks, but no thanks.” Reiji closes his eyes and smiles. “I figured you’d say that. We’ll see how your opinion holds after this upcoming tournament. I will leave the offer available until the end of that.”

Soon after, Reiji performs a successful Pendulum summon, which rattles Yuya. He accuses Declan, saying “how can you know how to do that? Only I can Pendulum summon!” Reiji tells him “this is just how the game works. It isn’t fair for one person alone to have such a strong ability.” This angers Yuya and he continues the duel.

Later, their duel is interrupted by Henrietta getting a phone call. On speaker mode, the person reports

“Professor Marco has been turned into a card.” Masumi gasps, and Yuzu notices that it was so ‘out of character’ for her to look so distraught. This causes Reiji to exit the duel field, to which Yuya begins to protest. Reiji turns momentarily and says, “I’ll give you the win. Your duel school is safe.” He continues to walk out, and Yuya and the gang start cheering. Yuzu feels slightly bad for being so happy, as she couldn’t help but notice how distressed the LDS students looked, especially Masumi. Internally though, she resolves that they deserved the loss, and that if they hadn’t have won, the school would’ve been shut down.

Meanwhile, Riley is reuniting with her brother at the LDS tower. She is showing more emotion than usual, and it is implied that she is closer to Reiji than with her mother. Henrietta glares at Riley, which makes her stop. Reiji says “you didn’t follow instructions.” Henrietta rolled her eyes. ‘Did you honestly think that I would pass up the opportunity to ruin Yusho?’ Reiji shook his head. “I’m not surprised, just disappointed.” Henrietta met her son’s annoyed glare, and turned around. “We agreed to team up against Leo and Yusho, and I did just that.” Reiji coldly said, “I know, but now you must understand that Yuya isn’t to blame. He was with me when the attack happened. But you knew that full

well, didn’t you? Yet you still deliberately disobeyed me?” Henrietta snorted and ignored the question. “Come along, Riley.” She growled.
Riley held tightly to Reiji’s hand, not letting go. Angry, Henrietta squeezed her small wrist tightly, which made Riley whimper in pain. “Stop it!” Reiji suddenly yelled, which took his mother off guard enough to release Riley. ‘You never raise your voice… You were always so scared of noise when you were younger.’ Henrietta remarked. Reiji composed himself and pushed his glasses up his nose. “Riley can make her own decisions.” Henrietta frowned. “I’d beg to differ, don’t you remember…” Reiji cut her off. “Unfortunately, yes, and it was a mistake. If you will excuse us mother, we have some business to get done.” With that, Reiji and Riley held hands as they walked away from Henrietta.

11. Unforeseeable Future

The episode starts with Leo Akaba staring up into a window. There appears to be a ginormous, maze like invention that is glowing with green light. There seems to be small shapes being dropped into it gracefully, like the fall of snow in winter. “Professor.” Leo turned around to see a man with a walnut-like face bowing to him. ‘Good, you’re here. Assemble the Obelisk Force. You, Commander Phoenix, and Commander Truesdale will be launching a raid on the XYZ Dimension to wipe out the last of the survivors.’ Noro nodded. “Sir, may I request that the Tyler Twins join the raid? After all, those two had some of the highest card count out of anyone in the first raid last year.” Leo nodded. “Yes, you may have them for this mission.” Noro smiled evilly. “We’ll wipe them all out, just you wait.”
Meanwhile, Reiji and Riley are in a different room when Claude reports further details about Marco’s carding. “Here. Whoever carded Marco sent this to us to make a point.” Claude handed Reiji the card, and it seemed to have the message ‘you’re next, Akaba’ on the back. “While we thought that it was someone from Obelisk Force at first, we soon

detected that it was actually XYZ energy." Reiji narrowed his eyes. "Strange. Why would an XYZ user use the same weapon that killed millions of their own kind?" Claude looked at Reiji earnestly. "Are you not concerned that whoever did this is targeting you? Plus the fact that they are probably carding more of our members as we speak? Shouldn't we take immediate action?" Reiji shook his head. "Not yet. If the person wants me, then I will meet them. Next time the person is close by, I will humble their request. I must remind you; if our goals align, we would benefit more as allies than enemies."

Later, Masumi, Dipper, and Kit are asking around the LDS about Marco. They won't give the trio anymore information, which deeply upsets Masumi.

At Yusho Duel School, Syuzo is confronting Yuya about Reiji's use of Pendulum cards. Yuya is angry that Reiji knew how to use them so quickly and used them without his permission, to which Syuzo has to break it to him that it's a card game so everyone must have access to the same things. Yuya grows unreasonably frustrated over this valid point, which prompts Syuzo into dueling him. Obviously then Yuya wins, and he declares "You've taught me a valuable lesson. I will try not to run away from my problems anymore!"

The episode ends with Sora walking around Paradise City at night, eating a sucker. Strolling by an alleyway, he sees movement. Quickly moving and flipping through the air, he jumps on a trash bin and asks, “who’s there?” No answer. He shrugs it off and continues walking. I could’ve sworn there was someone there… Ah well, it’s fine. This isn’t home, after all. The people here are nice, and wouldn’t attack me for no reason… This scene shows Sora’s incredible athletic prowess to the audience, which makes them wonder where he comes from.

12. I Come From...

The episode begins with Yuto hanging from a balcony in an alleyway, one that the audience will notice is the one that Sora passed. He climbs up, showing an impressive amount of arm strength. He reaches the roof of a building and looks out on the city below him. That kid isn't like the others… No one from here is that athletic. Yuto thinks, clenching his fist. I've finally found someone who might be linked to Leo after all! This moment is meant to shock the audience, as it implies that the place Sora comes from is the place that has Leo in it. Furthermore, it is also the place that just sent a second raid to Yuto's homeland, which just adds to the drama. Since Yuto and Shay are looking for Ruri, they aren't aware of the attack.

Yuya is at his normal school about to eat from his lunch box. Notably, it has a picture of his father at the bottom. He does what is implied to be his "lunchtime" ritual where he vows to spread his father's philosophy of "making people happy through dueltaining" and vows to always be happy for others' sake, which is notably the thing that Yuzu worries about. Yuzu, who is sitting beside him,

knows that this is the millionth time she's heard this speech, but she doesn't bother saying anything.
Suddenly, Sylvio arrives in front of them, accusing Yuya of attacking another LDS member. This time, Professor Marco. Once again, Yuya denies it, saying that he had no idea it was going on and that he wouldn't do that. He makes a point of "ask Declan if I'm the attacker! He'll say no! You know why? Because I dueled him when Marco was attacked!" Sylvio is shocked by this, and decides to stop accusing him, saying, 'fine. Of course you didn't attack Marco; you're far too weak.' Yuya takes offense to this, and Sylvio implies that Reiji will be creating Pendulum cards, and "once I get my hands on my own, I'm settling the score! Even if you weren't the one behind those attacks, I still need my revenge!"
After school, Yuya laments about not being able to get into the tournament, because of his bad duel record. There's barely enough time to win more duels, and he feels anxious. Yuzu suggests he duel Gong, but Yuya feels bad for constantly having Gong stick up for him. This ensues a flashback of Gong protecting Yuya from bullies all his life. Yuya declares that he will get stronger on his own, which makes Yuzu feel doubtful of her own abilities after her Masumi duel. She thinks to herself that she must

get stronger to protect her school, and to keep up with her friends.

Nico Smiley meets up with Yuya and gives him a free pass into the Arc League Championship thanks to his victory against the Sledgehammer. Yuya declines, resolving to get in how anyone would, which shocks Syuzo. Yuya also calls out on Nico Smiley being “corrupt” and manipulating young duelists like him and preying on their insecurities. This moment serves as a relieving moment for the audience, as it shows that Yuya has grown a little.

Sora is seen standing on top of the same building Yuto was previously at. Unknowingly, of course. He thinks to himself, how interesting that Declan is the president of the LDS corporation… Like father, like son, I suppose. Man, I wanna duel him so bad! Sora is interrupted by Yuzu calling to him. Sora climbs down, and Yuzu tells him that she knows that he wants to duel Reiji, and warns him against it. Yuzu suddenly takes Sora by the hand and runs with him, despite his protests. The scene pans out, and we see Yuto watching them both.

Meanwhile, Masumi and her friends head to the scene of the crime where Marco was carded. They try to investigate, but a LDS Professor named Herc stops them. Masumi tries to press for details about who carded Marco, but he doesn’t reveal anything,

and insists that they head back to class. Frustrated, Masumi runs off on her own afterwards.

Yuzu drags Sora all the way to the harbor, notably near the warehouse where she first encountered Yuto. Yuzu whispers in his ear that she wants him to teach her Fusion summoning. Sora asks if this is related to what happened with Masumi, and she nods. The memories from the duel come back to her, and she recalls how her loss put Yuya under a lot of pressure. Yuzu doesn't want to be a burden to her school, so she resolves to get stronger. Under normal circumstances, Sora would readily agree, but he knows that the cloaked duelist is watching them. That guy! He isn't like the others here… He's one of THEM. Sora thinks.

Despite knowing that he is being watched, Sora decides to teach Yuzu Fusion summoning. He shows her Polymerization, and basically explains it so I'm not going to write it all out.

Suddenly, Yuto leaps out from his hiding spot, with his duel disk engaged. Sora does the same, and they both leap back and forth, clashing their duel disks with incredible athletic anime logic. At first Yuzu is confused, but then she recognizes Yuto. "Who are you?" Sora accuses him. He gets no response. 'You're not from here!' Sora says through gritted teeth. "Nor are you." Yuto responds calmly for

fighting in mid-air. “I remember you! Why are you here? Were you the one who keeps attacking those LDS students?” Yuzu asks. Unlike Sora, she is questioning him out of curiosity and is ready to hear him out. Yuto doesn’t respond. Sora asks Yuzu what she means, and she explains about Marco being carded. Yuzu then asks Yuto, “were you really dueling Sylvio to save me, or to hurt LDS?”

Suddenly, as if the moment wasn’t dramatic enough, the warehouse doors fly open and Masumi Krystal makes a dramatic, grand entrance. She immediately runs at Yuto, and accuses him of carding her professor. Yuzu questions what Masumi is doing, and she tells her that she was doing her own investigating since the LDS officials won’t tell her anything useful. Masumi arms herself with a duel disk, and Yuzu tries to stop her, as she knows how Yuto can make dueling painful. Yuzu reasons with Masumi and says “we don’t know if he’s the culprit yet! I was here asking him that question!” Masumi says, “we’ll all know the truth if he’s an XYZ user!” This intrigues Sora further. I knew it! He thought.

Yuzu’s bracelet glows again, and Yuto disappears. Yuya enters the warehouse, and Yuzu realizes that it’s “just like before.” Masumi accuses Yuya of carding her professor, which Yuzu notes is completely out of character. Masumi is so rash all of

a sudden! I've never seen her like this! Yuya protests, and points out 'I was dueling Reiji when it happened, remember?' Masumi seems to understand, but quickly scolds him. "Don't call him Reiji! Only Henrietta is allowed to call him that! We call him Declan, understand?" Yuya nods quickly and apologizes. Masumi leaves, resolving to chase after Yuto.

Yuya asks Yuzu what the heck she was doing here, and why she hadn't answered his calls. Sora accidentally spills it and tells him that Yuzu was trying to learn Fusion summoning. The subject changes to Yuya announcing that he got his four opponents and that he just has to beat them to make it into the Arc League Championship. (By the way, all his friends are qualified, but he isn't) Yuya also tells Sora that he can arrange for him to get put into the tournament, as long as he wins 6 duels in a row. Sora confidently says, "easy! I'll find six opponents! Thanks, Yuya!" He goes to Yuya with a jump hug.

Sora notices that Yuzu is sadly looking at her bracelet, which makes him want to do a group hug. Afterwards, Yuzu claims that she "feels better," but is lying. She wonders, why does my bracelet do that? Am I cursed or something? Why does it do that when Yuya appears? At least it proves that Yuya and the masked duelist aren't the same person…

Meanwhile, Yuto is back in another alleyway. Why did that happen again? What's going on with her? Ruri's bracelet never did that back home… He walks away, and stares at his duel disk. That kid was teaching her Fusion Summoning! That proves that he's the enemy after all… But, Ruri wouldn't learn the ways of the enemy. Even if she were brainwashed, I'm sure she'd remember all that happened from the attack. Those memories are too painful to forget… This ultimately led Yuto to an epiphany, but it wasn't a good one. Despair washed over him; his chest burned with that familiar feeling, and his throat closed painfully as he swallowed back his sadness. That girl isn't Ruri. It never was…

13. Varying Accounts

The episode begins with Reiji observing how Yuya won his first match, and decided to decline Nico's offer. He smiles. Interesting that Yusho's son actually has integrity… Still, I knew that he was different, ever since I dueled him. Claude enters the room, and admits that he is worried because of exceptionally higher levels of Fusion Summoning lately. (Along with the XYZ summonings) They both agree that there is more than one outsider out in Paradise city. Reiji admits that he is "more concerned" with the Fusion user than the XYZ user, despite the fact that an XYZ user is carding their members. Claude seems to understand, but of course the viewers don't yet.

Meanwhile, Sora and Yuzu are practicing dueling. Yuzu attempts to Fusion summon, but an error message pops up and she panics. It turns out the problem was that she put the monster in her main deck and not the extra deck. The camera pans out, and shows that Yuto is spying on them again. This makes the audience realize that despite knowing that this girl isn't Ruri, he still seems to care for Yuzu to some degree. Alternatively, he seems to be keeping

an eye on Sora.
Later, (when Yuto isn't spying on them) Sora questions Yuzu about Yuto. Yuzu tells him all she knows, about Dark Rebellion, the fact that he makes damage real, and how he defeated Sylvio. Yuzu wonders out loud "why would he tell me that he doesn't want to see me hurt, yet proceeds to cause mass damage and hurt Sylvio?" Sora shrugged, and took a bite out of a dark chocolate bar. 'Want some?' He asks. "No thanks." She declines. "It helps with anxiety. You look like you need it." Sora presses. Yuzu finally takes a piece, while thinking about Yuto.
Meanwhile, Yuto unknowingly is near where Yuzu is. He closes his eyes and has painful memories come back to him in a blur. He suddenly remembers one that occurred shortly after Ruri's kidnapping.
Yuto looked around, scaling the area of debris and dust clouds for a sign; any sign of Ruri. He has a flashback of the attack on his homeland that happened only a few months ago. Seeing how far the dust spread, the destruction everywhere, he couldn't help but feel a pit of hopelessness befall him. Tears stung Yuto's eyes due to the dust, and he looked to the ground. Why her? What did Ruri do to deserve this? What did any of us do to deserve this? One moment she's here, safe in my arms, and now she's

gone… Taken by the same heartless monsters who destroyed everything. Everything I ever loved is gone… Yuto's tears seemed to be the only source of water on the dry ground he had seen in days, and he watched them fall.

Ever since Ruri's kidnapping, I've been… I've been hurting so many Fusion warriors lately out of anger… She wouldn't like what I've become. I want to give them what they deserve so badly, but… Yuto clenched his fist, and tightly closed his eyes. "…But I don't want to hurt anyone anymore!"

Suddenly, Yuto heard a strange sound. He looked up at a destroyed building, and saw a duelist on a motorcycle in a white jumpsuit. The motorcycle happened to have a duel disk on it, and the duelist turned it on. "Who are you?" Yuto shouts to the duelist. The duelist snorts. 'What do you mean, who am I? You know me already! I'm Yugo Damare! You captured Rin!' What? Yuto wonders. "I've never seen you before in my life!" Yuto retorts. "Don't play dumb! You kidnapper, creep! How could you take her away from me?" Yugo yells at him. Someone kidnapped a girl he knows? He's like me…! "Wait! My girlfriend was kidnapped recently! Maybe we're looking for the same person!" Yuto tried to reason with him, but the duelist wouldn't listen, and almost ran him over.

This idiot! Why won't he see reason? Yuto activates his duel disk, and Yugo summons Clear Wing Synchro Dragon. Similarly, Yuto summons Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon. "You liar! You're probably just trying to deflect!" Yugo accused. "I suppose I could say the same to you!" Yuto said angrily, despite not fully believing it. At that point, he didn't care. If this guy was trying to kill him for no reason and won't listen, then why bother to reason with him?

Shay and some unnamed rebellion members arrive to help aid Yuto, which causes Yugo to flee. "Who was that guy? Was he the guy who kidnapped Ruri?" Shay asked him. 'I'm not sure. I doubt it. A girl he knew also got kidnapped, so I don't know. I tried reasoning with him, but he seemed convinced that I stole her… He tried to run me over. Even though he's not a Fusion user, he's now the enemy.' Yuto responded. "What was his name?" Shay asked. "Yugo." Yuto replied.

Yuto snaps out of his flashback when he hears Yuzu screaming. When Yuto opens his eyes, realizes that he has been teleported by her bracelet again. He hears an explosion and sees Shay dueling Herc. He's just about to card the professor when Yuto intervenes. "Shay! I told you, we can't use the way of our enemies!" He says, grabbing Shay's arm.

Shay glares at Yuto. “Don’t you remember the plan, Yuto? We’re supposed to duel LDS until we reach Declan Akaba. We’d get there faster if we made a point.” Shay growled, managing to escape Yuto’s grip and seal Herc into a card.

Horrified, Yuto grabs Shay’s arm again. “We will not stoop to our enemies’ level. We fight these LDS members for information, and we let them go. Understand?” Shay nodded. “Fine…” Yuto could tell Shay wasn’t being genuine, but he couldn’t help but not press further. He was his friend, after all, and he understood how much it hurt to lose Ruri. Besides, deep within his heart, he couldn’t help but feel the exact same impulse Shay felt. The only reason Yuto didn’t act upon it is because he knows Ruri wouldn’t like it, and every time he does give in he feels conflicted. I don’t like the way hatred feels… In a world where there is nothing but hatred, I have to see reason. I have to be there for people. Someone has to.

Meanwhile, Yuya and Sora are eating dinner with Yoko. Yuya is weirded out by Sora’s strange flavor combinations, but Yoko finds them “cute.” Yuya thinks to himself, I hate to admit it, but Sora is really starting to feel like family. He’s like the brother I never had… Yuya clutches his Pendulum necklace. He’ll never replace Yusho, though.

Yuya is snapped out of his thoughts when Sora says, “what right do you have in being so confident in judging others? Your confidence will be your downfall.” Yuya asks Sora what he means by this, and Sora says, “you’re so confident that Yuzu likes you that you’re not making any moves toward her!” This makes Yuya’s face go red and he starts getting flustered and denies liking her. Yoko smiles in amusement.

At the same time, at Yuzu and Syuzo’s house, Yuzu is confronting her father about her bracelet. “Stop joking around!” Yuzu yells at him. ‘I’m not! You’ve had that bracelet ever since you were born!’ Yuzu snorts. “Right! In what world does a baby come out of their mother with a piece of jewelry? Besides, what do you know? You barely remember mom anyway!” Yuzu storms off and locks herself in her room, Syuzo tries to talk through the door.

“I heard from Yuya that you were getting lessons on Fusion Summoning through Sora. Were my teachings just not good enough for you?” Syuzo asks. Yuzu doesn’t respond at first, not knowing what to say to that. ‘Oh I see how it is! You’d rather be with boys than focus on your education! Is that why you were involved in the attacks on LDS students? You’re so desperate for their attention that you’d resort to being with bad boys?’ Syuzo

commented rudely, which pushed Yuzu over the edge. “Stop treating me like I’m some prize to be won! Of course I value my education! Why else would I learn Fusion Summoning by myself outside of school? I put in the effort on my own, and am willing to learn from my mistakes! Unlike you! Did you ever consider that your attitude might be why the only two women in your life hate you?” She yelled.

There was silence for a moment, and Syuzo apologized. “Just… At least tell me a little. I want to help you. Please tell me if you were associated with the attacks or not?” He asked. “Of course I wasn’t! I was a witness, dad! Do you not have any faith in me? I’ve been there for you when mom left, I’ve been Yuya’s comforter when his dad left, and I’ve helped run the duel school on my own! Why are you doubting my abilities? Just go away!” With that, Syuzo left.

Yuzu rolled over to the right side of the bed, and thought about Yuto again. Why do I keep thinking about him? Why does he either have to not say anything, or say something cryptic? Yuzu stares at her deck. Why can’t my dad understand? I am focusing on my education, I always have! I’m sick of being a burden! Someone that people have to protect, who’s only use is being a “comforter!” I

need to learn Fusion Summoning, because if I don't… I'll continue being a burden. Our school almost got shut down because of me.

I'm trying so hard to just focus on my own life, but with all the confusing, terrible things going on it's so hard! The drama with LDS, the mystery of the cloaked duelist, my bracelet… God, this stupid stupid bracelet! People probably think I sound insane! Dwelling on these mysteries just makes me sad, but my own life is pathetic enough. What's wrong with me?

The next day, Henrietta tells Reiji that someone anonymously sent him more carded people. "I think it's safe to assume that there are at least two XYZ users who are attacking students; one can turn people into cards, and the other can't. Then there's the Fusion user…" Reiji comments.

They are interrupted by Claude trying to stop Furio Sawatari from getting inside the room. Reiji lets him in. Furio immediately accuses them of sitting around and doing nothing about the XYZ user attacks. He yells that "Yuya Sakaki is guilty! As the future mayor of this town, I will see to it that Yuya gets arrested for harming my son and many others!" Reiji tries to convince him to not take legal action, but Furio keeps being pushy. Reiji loses his temper and slams his hands down on the desk, which silences

Furio. He defends Yuya, pointing out ‘Yuya was with me during the attack on Professor Marco. Plus, I believe your own son doesn’t even believe that it’s Yuya anymore.’ Furio stubbornly says “I will not sit around and do nothing” and runs off.

Meanwhile, Furio encounters Yuya and the street, and yells at some random LDS adults to capture him, saying “he’s the one who’s been attacking students!” Furio uses his status as “future mayor” to intimidate them and make them follow his orders. Running from the LDS adults, Yuya turns the corner to an alleyway and runs past Shay, who unintentionally comes to his rescue. Seeing that Yuya’s chasers were LDS members, this makes Shay start a duel. The LDS members realize that Shay is the one who attacked the students and not Yuya, despite Furio’s protests. The LDS members call the Institute, but Shay doesn’t wait patiently. He overlays his monster, and a gust of wind is summoned. Yuya and Furio are thrown back into a wall, where Yuya passes out on top of a garbage bin but Furio is conscious. He hears the screaming of the adults and sees a giant bird viciously attack them. The bird causes debris to fly everywhere, and its talons make vicious claw markings in the walls.

A bright light flashes in the alleyway, and the wind carries the carded LDS adults to where Furio is

laying. This terrifies him, as he realizes that Shay was the one who attacked students after all. He notices Shay approaching him, and starts to run, but he isn't fast enough. Without looking behind, Furio sees the bright light in front of him due to it being a dark alleyway, and that is the last thing he sees before being carded.

Yuya wakes up to Nico Smiley standing in front of him, and he panics for a moment, remembering Shay's terrifying monster. He tries to tell Nico to "spread the word" to stop people from getting hurt, but Nico thinks that he just had a bad dream. "Save this for later, you need to rest up. After all, having good health is important for being a pro duelist!" Yuya agrees to this, and groggily follows Nico, neither of them noticing the obvious claw marks along the wall. The camera pans out to a claw mark going as far as onto an overpass nearby.

14. Differences

The episode begins with Reiji practicing with his own Pendulum cards. It is implied that they have improved since his duel with Yuya, but don't quite have the same energy response as Yuya's. Claude is supportive of Reiji, but Reiji insists that they must keep trying until they are perfected. He seems to be training in case the XYZ and Fusion users turn out to be enemies.

Meanwhile, Yuya is feeling pressure from Nico to push his personal problems aside to entertain the crowd. He reaches a dilemma, as this is the opposite of what the people close to him want. While this is what Yuya wants, a part of him knows it's wrong, but it's what his father did. He witnesses Syuzo working hard by practicing drawing from a duel disk, and then proceeds to break down about Yuzu and him "growing apart." Yuya does remember that Yuzu hasn't been around the duel school as often. I feel bad for not noticing, but I've been so busy with my four matches!

Back with the LDS trio, Masumi is still on the search for Yuto, determined to question him about Marco. She ends up finding the claw marks from

Shay's previous attack, and even stumbles upon Furio Sawatari carded! This scares her, so she takes it and runs. That monster! How could he do something like that? She wonders.
Masumi runs into Sora and Yuzu practicing again, and she begs them to tell her what they know about the attacks. Yuzu claims that she doesn't know much, to which Masumi gets mad and calls her a liar. "You acted like you knew so much about these incidents, yet now you're playing dumb? I've beaten you before, I can force the answer out of you!" Masumi threatens. 'Masumi, what's gotten into you? You were so much different when we dueled!' Yuzu yells. "That's none of your concern! I thought you were special, but now I know my heart is lying!" Masumi said, taking out her duel disk. Sora encourages Yuzu to duel her, saying "this is your moment! You've wanted a rematch so badly!"
Sora comments about how much Yuzu has grown, and how she now knows that Fusion summons aren't as intimidating as they used to be. Masumi takes this as an insult to Professor Marco, and challenges Sora instead. Sora insists that he'll just hurt her pride more, which makes her angrier. "The Leo Institution trains the strongest duelists around! What right do you have to say something like that, when you're from the Yusho school?"

A voice chimes into the conversation: “You’re from Leo?” Everyone is shocked to see a duelist in a blue trench coat and mask arrive. He pushes Yuzu to the side, which causes her cards to fall to the ground. Shay demands to duel Masumi, who in turn questions him on Marco. Right as Shay is about to start the duel, Yuto swoops in and grabs Shay’s arm again, (and notably takes off his mask for the first time since he dueled Sylvio) saying ‘stop being so reckless! I’ve told you before, this isn’t our battlefield and these people aren’t our enemies.’ Shay yanks his scarf down. “You better believe it’s our battlefield! Everywhere I go now is my battlefield! I need to do this to get Ruri back, and if you get in my way again, you’re my enemy!”

While Yuto and Shay argue, Masumi contacts her friends to call for LDS backup, as she believes she has found the XYZ users. “You told me that I need to stop you whenever you do something reckless.” Yuto pointed out. ‘I am doing what you said.’ Yuzu tries to interrupt Masumi, saying, “we don’t know if Shay is guilty!”

Shay finally notices Yuzu, and he takes his sunglasses off dramatically. “Ruri? What are you doing here? How are you here? Did you get away? What…?” Shay bombards Yuzu with questions, which confuses her. Yuto takes matters into his own

hands and punches his friend in the solar plexus, immobilizing him. Yuto picks Shay up and hoists his friend's body over his shoulder, and whispers, "I'm sorry my friend, but that's not her." Those are the last things Shay hears before passing out. Yuzu is shocked by Yuto's strength, not just by his punch, but the fact that he can carry his significantly taller friend on one shoulder with ease.

As Yuto turns to leave, knowing that Masumi has called for backup, (and that was partly why he punched Shay) he kindly picks up Yuzu's Polymerization card for her. He says, "this card doesn't suit you." Yuzu is shocked, as she had been training so hard with it and Fusion Summoning meant so much to her now. Sora retorts "hey, I don't like when people insult presents I give to my friends!" Yuzu gets between Sora and Yuto, as she trusts both of them, but is unaware of their hatred of each other.

As Dipper and Yuya arrive, Yuzu's bracelet teleports Yuto and Shay away. Dipper asks Masumi where the XYZ user is, but still in shock, she says "they're… gone."

Yuya asks Yuzu if she's okay, but she breaks down crying because of confusion. "These people keep thinking I'm someone else… And he keeps disappearing whenever you show up. Why does he

look so much like you?" Yuya asks, 'what are you saying?' Yuzu claims, "I don't even know anymore." Yuya picks up her cards from the ground, and notices that the only card that didn't fall was Polymerization, as she is holding it. (That's what he thinks, anyway. He didn't witness Yuto pick it up for her) Yuya feels oddly sad seeing Yuzu cry, and he hands her the deck.

Masumi apologizes to Yuzu for everything, and Yuzu forgives her.

The episode ends with Yuya and friends leaving, and he, Sora, and Yuzu are left. They pass by a fortune telling place. Sora remarks how cool it is, as he says that he's never seen something like this where he's from. Yuya and Yuzu tell him that it's a total hoax, but Sora's already in front of the crystal ball. The lady charges $5 per person, but lowers it to $2 because she "senses something about these people."

Sora goes first, and the ball turns dark instantly. "You are hiding something dark within you." The lady comments. 'Ohhh mysterious!' Sora says. "It must be my chocolate addiction! This must be my warning before my sugar levels get too high!" He says.

Yuzu goes next. The ball turns pink. "You are facing some confusion right now… But all will become clear over time. I can sense that there will be love in

your future as well.” Yuzu blushed. ‘What?’
Before she can ask, the lady gestures Yuya over. The ball also turns dark, but not as dark as Sora’s. “You are destined to make people happy, as you are on the path of enlightenment. To understand how to truly make people happy, you must learn their suffering… It will be difficult, but it is the only way to learn true joy.” These predictions are meant to make the audience wonder…

15. Shadows of the Past

The episode starts with Claude reporting to Reiji about the sudden absence of Masumi Krystal, Dipper O'rion, and Kit Blade. He is worried that they are "meddling in affairs that do not concern them." Reiji however, says "I don't blame them. I understand what it's like to try to take matters into your own hands when the adults you trusted keep secrets from you." Reiji has a brief flashback to him stumbling into a dark room with equipment, but the scene is cut quickly, leaving the audience to wonder what he found. This scene takes place the year Yusho and Leo vanished, so Reiji is 13 in the flashback.

Meanwhile, Yuzu is staring at her Polymerization card that Yuto gave to her. What did he mean, that the card "didn't suit me?" How can he judge if a card suits me or not? Maybe he's not as good of a guy as I thought… It is a little strange that he keeps showing up around me… Yuzu shivers at the thought. I hope I'm not getting stalked.

Yuzu sees Masumi running into an alleyway, and decides to follow her, as she wants to know some answers herself as well.

Far ahead of Yuzu, Masumi runs into Shay. He asks her where Sora and Yuzu are, (he doesn't know their names but I'm gonna write it anyway) but Masumi doesn't know. She accuses him of attacking Professor Marco, but he has no idea who she's talking about. Masumi explains that Marco was the LDS Fusion teacher, to which Shay says, "oh him. Marco's dueling style was weak and flimsy; he was one of the easiest opponents from here. I carded him and sent it to LDS." Enraged, Masumi tells him to shut up, and 'Marco was the kindest teacher I could ask for! I can't forgive you for belittling him!' Shay snorts. "Everyone from Leo is like that. None of them possess any steeled strength or iron will. They were all… weak."

Masumi asks "so… you were the one behind all the attacks?" Shay finally confirms it, making Masumi clench her fist. "If you want to get your revenge, then beat me in a duel and show me that LDS really has some strength." Masumi calls Kit and Dipper to come assist her, as she tells them that she found the XYZ user.

Yuzu tries to find Masumi, but suddenly, Yuto appears in front of her. Her breath hitched in her throat. Oh god, he appeared out of nowhere! And in a creepy alleyway! It's so cliche, but I can't believe I walked into this! Sensing the fear in her, Yuto takes

his mask off and says, “It’s okay, I’m not going to do anything to you. Unfortunately, I can’t let you go any further.” Yuzu’s eyes flashed with shock. “Real nice excuse. Do you realize how creepy this is? You’re wearing all black, finding me an alleyway, and telling me that I ‘can’t go any further?’” Yuto seemed to understand without her having to elaborate, and his eyes softened. “I’m sorry about the set-up. Forgive me, I don’t want you to associate me with those kinds of people.” Once again, Yuzu is shocked by his kindness. It doesn’t make sense… How is someone as sketchy as him so much more polite than most people I know? (Notably, after this interaction, Yuto stops wearing his mask and goggles. After Yuzu implies how, ahem, he dresses like a rapist, he never wears those accessories ever again. He also occasionally ditches the cloak, so that he isn’t wearing all black. Just a little detail I wanted to mention to show how much Yuto takes other people’s feelings seriously. I also just like the idea of a MALE fictional character for ONCE understanding a universal concern for women)

Meanwhile, Shay tells Masumi, “if you think only two LDS members will suffice, then you are underestimating me.” Masumi watches her friends arrive, excited to beat the baddie for glory. Shay grits his teeth. ‘Seeing you three makes me sick.

How can you all fight just for something as petty as glory? Must be nice to have THAT luxury.'

Yuzu and Yuto hear the duel begin. "Is he your friend?" She asks. He nods. "Can't you stop him?" He shakes his head. "When Shay Obsidian puts his mind to something, he's impossible to stop. He's like a raging boar." Wait, but… "But you stopped him back at the harbor from attacking Masumi, didn't you? He's facing her right now!" Yuto turned to look at her, almost smiling. "I was doing that because Shay was being rude to you." Do I believe him? Yuzu tries to step past Yuto to get a closer look, but he grabs her wrist. "I don't want to see you hurt again." Memories flashback to Yuzu. He said it again!

Yuzu turns back to Yuto, both in annoyance and confusion. "Why do you keep saying that, when you and Shay keep hurting other people? The first time we met, you said that to me, but your duel landed Sylvio in the hospital! Are you okay with Masumi getting hurt, but not me?" Yuto considers this point thoughtfully. 'You're different from the rest. There are terrible people in this world who need to be taught a lesson; they need to go through suffering so that they can truly become better people, and learn respect. Sylvio needed to learn that, as do most of the people here. These people live a cozy, pampered

lifestyle that they take for granted.' Yuto finally says. Woah, I've never heard him say so much at once! "I… Guess I can see where you're coming from. But who are you, and why are you here?"
The duel with Shay and the trio continues, but I'm writing mostly about Yuzu and Yuto as their interactions are more important and it's implied the duel's going while they're speaking.
Yuto closes his eyes. "I'm sorry, I never told you my name. My name is Yuto Ikari, and my comrade and I have come here to search for Declan Akaba." Yuzu's eyes widened. 'Declan? Why?' Yuto shook his head. "I don't want to involve you in our mission. I want you to continue living in blissful ignorance." Yuzu frowned. "But you just said that the people here are ungrateful and pampered. I don't want you to associate me with them!" She says with conviction.
Yuto stared into Yuzu's eyes for a second, and finally smiled. It was so much different from Yuya's smile… Yuya smiles far more frequently, but this is… it's so genuine and beautiful. It's so much brighter than Yuya's smile… How can that be, though? "I admire your resolve. I wish there were more people in this world like you." Yuto said. Yuzu smiled back. 'Are you gonna tell me or do I have to make another speech?' Yuto nodded. "Shay and I come from the XYZ Dimension, which was a

peaceful Utopia…(no pun intended) Until the Fusion Dimension attacked us for no reason, and carded millions of people. Our home is now a wasteland full of debris and smoke, and what was once a city is a pile of ashes, where people struggle to survive and die in misery." Yuzu's eyes widened. "There's an XYZ Dimension?" Yuto nodded. "There's one for each summoning method. This one is simply 'the Standard Dimension.'"

Yuto continued. "After my family was killed and my house was destroyed, one of my comrades was kidnapped…" Is that…? 'Wait! Is that… Ruri? Shay thought I was her!' Yuzu said. "You two have the same face, but for some reason, before that last encounter; you two were completely identical. Now the only similarity you share is the face… It's as if some kind of magic warped my vision and I treated you like Ruri. I'm sorry for that." He apologizes a lot for someone who lost so much… If anything, he's the one who needs people apologizing to HIM.

"Shay and I were told by a fellow comrade that they had witnessed Ruri get kidnapped by a Fusion Dimension officer, so we set off to go search for her. We made a plan to attack LDS to get to Reiji, because he's the son of Leo Akaba; the person who is the head of the Fusion Dimension." Yuto told her. 'Woah, slow down! Reiji's dad is in the Fusion

Dimension?' Yuto nodded. "We thought that getting to Reiji would make Leo desperate, and we planned on trading Reiji's freedom for Ruri… We would then make a plan to invade Duel Academy." Yuzu gasped. "What's Duel Academy?" Yuto's eyes narrowed. "It's a military base where Leo trains children from a young age to grow up to be soldiers… He trains those who should be basking in blissful ignorance to be heartless killers who become numb to the harsh realities of life."

"To be honest, I find it surprising that Fusion Summoning is your enemy. Both schools here teach it, and I learned it so that I could be strong enough to protect my friends." Yuzu admitted. Yuto flinches slightly, which she notices.

Meanwhile, Shay comments "as I thought: I don't feel any iron will or steeled strength from any of you." Dipper insults him by saying, 'how can you be so arrogant when you're backed into a corner! You give XYZ users a bad rep!' Shay's eyes blaze with fury. "You're the one who's a disgrace! I'm more of an XYZ user than you'll ever be! Your stupid school may teach all summoning methods, but it's so cheap. It hardly has any passion!" He continues on, "we were always beaten and fighting on the edge." The LDS trio looks shocked, confused by what he's saying. "No matter what, we always had to stand up

and fight again, until we overwhelmed the enemy with our resilience."

Shay overlays his Vanishing Laniuses and says, "from the shadows, the falcon soars on wings of courage, talons READY FOR THE REBELLION! WITNESS THE ASCENT OF RAIDRAPTOR RISE FALCON!" The trio is surprised by its low attack point value, but Shay activates its effect. It gains the attack of all of his opponent's monsters. Since they are dueling in a battle royale style, Rise Falcon gains even more than normal. As the effect activates, the falcon's wings are set ablaze, and it ends up having 164,000 attack. Shay attacks ruthlessly, which sends them all flying backwards and debris fills the air. Despite the fact that he was literally screaming at the students, Shay looks on at his defeated opponents in utter silence and apathy.

Meanwhile, Yuto explains to Yuzu that "my friends and I are fighting in a war to stop the oppression of Duel Academy, and create a world where no one gets hurt. If you must be involved, I just want you to survive, even if that means Fusion Summoning. There is nothing wrong with changing yourself to get stronger; and if that involves using that card to protect your friends, then so be it." Yuto smiles again, and Yuzu still remains shocked at his resemblance to Yuya. "I will continue to fight, but

only when I need to. I do not wish to bestow harm onto others, unless they are truly bad people. Even so, I only wish that they are harmed enough to regret their actions and be better." That's so… Admirable… Especially coming from someone who's involved in a war.

'You know, you're a lot like Ruri.' Yuto admits fondly. "Who exactly is Ruri?" Yuzu asks. "She's Shay's younger sister, and… My girlfriend." Yuzu smiles. "Shouldn't you be Yuto Obsidian, then?" She teases. She is surprised to see not annoyance or denial across Yuto's face at her teasing; rather, his eyes widen and a hint of pink spreads across his cheeks. Then again, Yuzu couldn't fully tell, as the alleyway was dark. Perhaps I imagined it… But I could've sworn I made him blush. For some reason, that thought was oddly amusing. "You know, that's exactly what my friends once said." He said softly. Yuzu smiled again. The thought of making such a hardened, stoic warrior like Yuto blush was funny to her.

"I believe the duel is over." Yuto suddenly tells Yuzu, his face going back to his normal stoic expression. 'Is Masumi okay?' She asks. Yuto nods. "We won't harm them again." Yuzu thanks him. "I don't know if I'll ever see you again, but good luck on your mission!" She says. "Good luck to you on

yours.” Yuto says in return, before disappearing into the shadows.
The episode ends with Shay standing over the trio’s bodies. He decides not to card them.
Suddenly, Shay hears noise. Claude and five other LDS adults surround him. “Took you guys long enough. I’m sick of dealing with the garbage!” Shay said to them. ‘Take me to Declan Akaba!’ He demands. On cue, Reiji appears behind Claude, and walks up to Shay calmly. “If I am wanted, I am right here.” The employees step aside and let Reiji get closer to him. “What did you want to say?”

16. Attachments and Burdens

The episode begins right where the end left off: Shay confronting Declan Akaba. “Considering your repeated attacks on LDS members, I assumed that you wanted to speak with me.” Reiji says calmly. Shay smiles. ‘I’ve been waiting for this moment! I challenge you to a duel!’ Reiji asks why Shay would want to fight him, and he retorts that it isn’t his business. Reiji comments “are you doing this to rescue Ruri?” Shay’s eyes widened. “How did you…?” Reiji cuts him off. “Masumi testified that she heard you ask for Ruri. With this, I deduced that she was someone dear to you and your comrade, who is being held captive.” Shay, still frozen, thinks back to when Yuto told him that Yuzu wasn’t Ruri. They both understood that Ruri would never play Polymerization with a smile on her face, nor would she even consider learning it.

Shay tells Declan that “I know Ruri is held captive at Duel Academy, so I attacked LDS members to draw you out because of your connection to Duel Academy.” At the mention of Duel Academy, Reiji pushes his glasses up his nose. ‘Just as I suspected. You want to use me as a hostage for an exchange.’

Shay agrees to this statement, saying, “If I have Leo Akaba’s son as a bartering chip, even someone like him won’t be able to say ‘no.’” Shay notices Reiji shaking his head with a hint of some emotion. Sadness? Anger? He couldn’t tell.

“I’m not so sure that your plan will work. After all, my father abandoned me at 13, so it stands to reason that he probably doesn’t value me at all. If you were to use me as a bartering chip, at best, he wouldn’t hesitate to decline the offer. At worst, he’d card all of us, including your sister.” Reiji tells Shay. The thought of Ruri being carded horrified him, and he stood in shock. ‘I have no objection to you dueling me, but I have one condition. If you fulfill this condition, I will gladly be your opponent. Once you beat me, you can do what you will with me, but just remember the risk you’re taking if you choose this course of action.’ Reiji says, and he and Claude turn to leave. “Wait! What’s the condition?” Shay calls out to them.

Meanwhile, Nico Smiley has Yuya’s final match to qualify for the Championship be against Gong Strong, his best friend. He purposefully has Yuya’s friends somewhere he can’t see them, so he can’t rely on their support. Yuya angrily calls Nico out on his manipulation, especially when Nico starts saying things like “Yuya has always relied on his strong

friend to protect him from the criticisms of others after Yusho's disappearance." Yuya says, 'stop using my father's legacy as a way to use me!'

Gong approaches Yuya, and tells him that he "consented" to the setup and admitted that "you need to learn that your friends can't solve your problems forever. They may be able to support you, but no one should bear the burden of carrying someone's burdens. You must face them yourself." At first Yuya is shocked, and argues against this idea, until Gong drops the bomb on Yuya that "you made me feel this way our whole childhood!" A flashback ensues of Gong protecting Yuya from multiple bullies, and constantly comforting Yuya. Another scene shows Gong not being able to focus on his studies at his school due to constantly worrying about Yuya. "After distancing myself from you for a while, I've learned to focus on myself and my own emotions. I can't carry your burdens forever!" Yuya thinks about this for a while, and starts to feel guilty. The duel begins.

Gong tries to teach Yuya important lessons behind the duel, a lot of these lessons are part of the Strong philosophy about "not letting attachments get in the way of happiness." Gong says "this doesn't mean that you can't have friends, but if it's affecting your life negatively, then something's wrong." This was a

difficult pill for Yuya to swallow.
Yuya beats Gong in the end, which makes them both emotional. He apologizes for burdening Gong with his emotions for years, and Gong forgives him. They hug it out, resolving to “always support each other.” Yuya tells Gong that he’ll ask before dumping things onto him, and that he’ll try not to rely on Gong as heavily. Yuzu and the Yusho school gang come out of a room, with tears in their eyes from the emotional duel. They tell Yuya that they were watching the whole time from a screen. They congratulate the two of them. Sora declares that they need to have a “Yuya celebration” and lists off all the sweets he wants to get.
The episode ends with Claude informing Reiji about Yuya finally being qualified for the upcoming Tournament. Satisfied, Reiji says, “this means that all the duelists that I have an eye on are in… However, if there is a duelist I find worthy enough before the tournament ends, I won’t hesitate to consider them.” Claude nods, and says, ‘Masmi, Kit, and Dipper’s memories of Shay are being erased as we speak, and they are healing up fine. Once Shay enters the tournament, they will have no memory of him.’ Reiji puts his fingers together. “I am intrigued to see how much strength Shay truly possesses. As it stands, there isn’t a doubt in my mind that he is

qualified enough to be on my team. The only obstacle would be his unpredictable emotions."
Reiji takes out a file that says "Lancers Selection" and flips through pictures of Yuya Sakaki, Yuzu Hiiragi, Sora Perse, Riley Akaba, Sylvio Sawatari, and Shay Obsidian. Who will be the Lancers of this generation? He wondered.

17. Let The Arc League Championship Begin!

The episode starts in a gray, dusty environment with debris everywhere. The audience witnesses hundreds of Obelisk Force Soldiers summon Ancient Gear Hounds, and the camera pans to shadowed reflections of the hounds viciously attacking innocent civilians, and them being carded afterwards. We see an elderly man and a child trying to duel, but obviously don't know how as they are innocent civilians.

Unfortunately, a man with blueish green hair and a black coat beats the duo in one turn. An onion-headed boy suddenly arrives, and recognizes them as his own father and brother. He quickly tries to run to rescue them. The man in the black coat is faster, and reaches the father and son. A flash of purple light appears from their duel disks. "Father! Haru!" The onion-headed boy cries out, his face plastered with an expression of pure despair. He watches as two cards fall to the ground. The man picks up the cards and taunts the boy. "You want these?" He asks, and then stomps them to the ground. This enrages the boy, and he summons a large dragon that ends up

sending him backwards. He runs over and picks up the two cards.

A kid with brown spiky hair rushes to the onion-headed boy's side, along with a girl with bluish purple hair. The onion-headed boy suddenly collapses. The brown haired boy and the girl cradle the other boy in their arms. "Kaito…" The girl whispers. Kaito, the onion-headed boy, opens his eyes and starts to cry. "Saya… Allen… The Obelisk Force killed my family…" Saya and Allen see the two cards in his hand, and they gasp as they see the look of horror in his brother and father's faces. "First Ruri, then Yuto and Shay, and now my family is gone…" Kaito says before passing out.

Allen screams out in anger and despair, and he and Saya begin dragging Kaito to safety. Saya begins to cry. "How could they do that to Kaito's family?" Allen can't respond. We were already attacked a year ago… Why launch a second raid? What more does Duel Academy want from us?

Meanwhile, the Yusho gang are getting ready for the Championship. With Yuya finally qualified, Syuzo is being dramatic and is congratulating everyone. However, they soon realize that Yuya has gone missing.

Reports deliver exposition to the audience about the Tournament: The Akaba's have a special VIP booth

in the stands where they watch the tournament, because they are the sponsors. The report implies that this is an annual tournament with different dueling branches. One for children, one for middle/high schoolers, and one for adults. “This is the biggest championship in the world, so naturally tourism is high! In the past, people from across the world have tried to get a seat here; some even illegally!” The report comments how “unusual” it is to actually see Reiji in the public eye, as the last time he was this open was when he won in all branches and became a pro duelist.

Everyone gets worried about Yuya being gone, as people are spreading rumors about him “being like his dad.”

Yoko finds Yuya on the bridge swinging his Pendulum necklace, remembering the last time his father saw him, which was three years ago. The last thing his father had told him was, “I’m proud of you, son. No matter what happens, we must remember these moments. Don’t forget me, and I won’t forget you.” Yoko insists that Yuya meet up with his friends, as they are waiting for him.

When Yuya meets up with them, he is excited to see that Gong managed to qualify. They run into an unnamed bully that used to bully Yuya. Gong considers intervening, but decides to let Yuya handle

it on his own. The bully is shocked that Yuya is standing up to him, (as in the past Gong had been the one to do it) and says, “we’ll settle this later… In a duel.”

The opening ceremony starts, where Nico Smiley announces each duel school and contestants. LDS naturally goes first, and the duelists they chose were Masumi Krystal, Dipper O’rion, Kit Blade, Sylvio Sawatari, and to their surprise, Shay Obsidian. The camera pans to Reiji and Shay looking at each other from afar, and flashes back to Reiji’s condition that the viewer didn’t see: Reiji will duel Shay as long as he participates in the tournament. “I plan on using this tournament as a way to narrow down who the best duelists are, and together we will lead the charge against my father.” Reiji warns Shay that there is a hidden warrior from Duel Academy amongst them.

The Bandit Warrior Academy comes in, with last year’s runner up Iggy Arlo. Yuya thinks, he’s so intimidating! I don’t want to duel him!

Some other schools with minor characters get announced, but they’re not important because then Yusho Duel School is announced. The reporter talks about how Yuya has gotten famous for his new Pendulum summoning method.

Nico forces Yuya to make a speech on the spot,

which he protests against, but by then it's too late. He starts getting overwhelmed by everyone staring at him, and knows that they are judging him for being afraid. Yuzu says to him, "just tell them who you are." Yuya takes a deep breath and talks about how "since my father's disappearance, I've been known as the son of a coward. For years, I've tried to make people happy and spread Yusho's legacy. While it may have helped others, deep down, it hurt to do so. But now, with the power of Pendulum, I've realized that I have a bigger influence than just being the son of a coward. I will entertain you all, just like Yusho once did, and with a real smile on my face!" Reiji is the first to clap, and everyone joins in, except Shay. Shay narrows his eyes at Yuya, thinking I've seen that kid before. Whatever he thinks, he's wrong. He will always be the son of a coward… He's even worse than a coward to lionize Yusho and aspire to be just like him.

Syuzo comments, "Yuya really wants to be like his father… I guess there's no stopping him." He says this rather sadly. Yoko shakes her head. 'Yuya isn't like his father. He has upstaged Yusho already.'

Nico announces that their duel disks should be updated with who their opponent's for the first round will be, and they all look. Yuya will duel Sylvio tomorrow, Yuzu will duel Masumi today,

Gong will duel the bully tomorrow, the trio of kids will all duel today, and to Yuya and Yuzu's horror, Sora will duel Shay tomorrow. "Sora! Please be careful! He's dangerous. He's just like the cloaked duelist; he can make you feel pain!" Yuzu tells him. Sora shrugs. "It's okay, I'll be fine. I've dueled against plenty of XYZ users before. This should be a sinch!" He then takes a bite out of his lollipop.

Yuzu asks Masumi why Shay is among their ranks, and asks if she remembers what happened. Masumi says, "what are you talking about? Shay has been at LDS for a month. He's at the top of the XYZ course." This shocks Yuzu, but she can't continue the conversation due to the tournament starting. Did Masumi hit her head or something? How could she forget dueling against someone as intense as Shay? Maybe her duel with Shay hurt her so badly that she forgot everything…

Ally shows Yuzu her opponent, and she mentions that it is a kid from the LDS. "Really? I didn't see them in the opening ceremony." Yuzu comments. "Riley Akaba…? Oh no, I'm going up against an Akaba!" Ally says, getting worried. Yuzu felt bad for her, and tried to reassure her.

The Youth Division begins their duels.

Meanwhile, Shay has a flashback. He hasn't been in contact with Yuto since joining the tournament, but

he remembers the last exchange they had.
“Shay? You spared them?” Yuto gestured toward an unconscious Masumi, Dipper, and Kit. ‘Forget them, I just had a confrontation with Declan Akaba.’ Shay informed. Yuto asked what happened. “He seemed to have figured out our intentions pretty easily…” Yuto was shocked. “How?” Shay shrugged. “The important part is that Declan told me that our plan to use him as a hostage wouldn’t work, because Leo doesn’t care about him. LDS may be run by Leo’s son, but he isn’t working with Duel Academy. Declan suggested that I join him and some other duelists in a rebellion against Duel Academy instead, as that would benefit the both of us.” Shay told him. “Interesting.” Yuto mused. “He said that if I participated in the Arc League Championship and joined his team, he would let me duel him…”
Yuto closed his eyes in contemplation. “What will our next move be then, Shay?” Shay met his gaze. ‘I think we both have to join this group. The two of us won’t be enough in a fight against Duel Academy.’ Yuto opened his eyes. “I agree. I think that that is the sensible option. Whoever this Declan is… He seems like he would make for a better ally than enemy. We don’t want to get on his bad side, especially if he is willing to aid us in rebelling against Leo.” Shay nodded. “It’s settled then.” Yuto shook his head.

“Question: how will I join the group if I’m not qualified for the tournament?” Shay narrowed his eyes. “I’ll get you in. I’m sure Declan will find it useful to have another candidate.”

Back in the present, Shay looked toward the LDS trio he attacked. He remembered Declan telling him to “play nice” with them, as they had their memories erased of their duel. Yuto and I might be one step closer to finding Ruri… It wasn’t the way we intended, but that doesn’t matter now. We will find her!

18. The Child of War

The episode begins with a flashback. A girl in a blue hoodie is hiding under a table as explosions sound in the distance. Tanks roll by the broken down house that she is staying in, and there appears to be no sign of life, except for her. The girl looks terrified, and is wondering where her parents are. She runs from her hiding spot and stumbles upon her parents bleeding out. She starts crying, and with what little strength the mother has, she says, “run, Riley. Run. Get out of here.” A tank starts to approach them, and Riley runs. An explosion occurs, and she passes out.

Riley awakens to being strapped to a chair in a white room. The door opens, and Henrietta enters with some unnamed men. “The child was found laying in a warzone. She appears to have lost her home and family. She is barely reactive to anything, and seems to have lost her sense of identity.” Henrietta looks at the child and smiles. “Perfect. This girl will serve as the ultimate weapon for the Leo Institute’s fight against Duel Academy. She is the ultimate Lancer.”

In the present, Ally is facing off against Riley. A reporter goes up to them both, asking them how they

feel about their first match. Ally responds in enthusiasm, but when the reporter goes up to Riley, she doesn’t say a word. Riley stands there in a robotic-like stance with clouded eyes, void of any emotion. This is meant to disturb the audience. The reporter gets creeped out and awkwardly backs away, and lets the duel start. Riley instinctively looks toward Reiji, but accidently catches her mother’s eye. Henrietta is seen glaring angrily at Riley and mouthing something, and her eyes widen in fear, before showing flashbacks of Henrietta torturing her in the white room. Ally asks Riley if she is alright, which makes Riley go back to her normal robotic state.

They duel, and Riley beats Ally pretty quickly. She isn’t upset by the loss, but is happy that Fredrick won his duel. He and Tate try to reassure her by pointing out how strange and creepy Riley seemed, but Ally admits that she doesn’t believe that’s true, as she thought Riley looked sad.

The episode ends with Yuzu calling Sora, wondering where he is as she wants him to watch her duel Masumi. Sora is seen spectating other duels, looking for someone he deems as a “worthy opponent.” He accepts Yuzu’s call, and says that he’ll be right there. He accidentally runs past Shay, and the scene dramatically slows down as the two of them pass.

The camera does a close-up on Shay’s face, where he is horrified. However, when the same is done to Sora, he simply smiles.

19. Mandela

The episode starts with a flashback to Henrietta and some unnamed men watching an unconscious Masumi, Kit, and Dipper. They are lying on white examination table, with wires hooked to their heads. Henrietta demands the men turn the machine on and watch their vitals, and he obeys. One man gets onto a computer screen and observes the trio's progress in their memories being erased. "Since we are only getting rid of their memories of Shay, this won't take very long. In fact, it will be over in about five minutes." Henrietta smiles to herself. Reiji is another step closer to leading the rebellion…

Nico Smiley announces Yuzu and Masumi to the dueling field. The two walk up, and she once again asks Masumi why she doesn't remember Shay. Masumi says the same thing as before, and says, "your eyes are still distracted. You still have no shine." Yuzu gets mad at her. "You have got to be the most infuriating person I've ever met! You say one thing, and then you go and do something else! Why won't you answer me, and why do you keep insulting me?" She asks. Yuzu felt a little bad about her outburst, but she couldn't help but feel as though

it was justified. Subconsciously, she was mad at Masumi because she was mad at herself… For being too weak to win the duel, and for putting pressure on Yuya. She shook her head. No… I'm not going to worry about what Yuya thinks anymore… Gong taught me that. I'm not going back to being his little comforter anymore!

The action field is "infinite bridges," which is exactly what it sounds like. There are bridges everywhere, with stairs to climb up and down to different levels. "Just looking at it for too long will give you a headache. Don't even think about looking down into the abyss!" Nico says. The duel begins.

Once it was Yuzu's turn, she thought to herself, I knew it. I knew Masumi would bring out a Fusion monster on her first turn. She must want to end this quickly… Well, unfortunately for her… Yuzu turns to look over at Sora in the stands, and they both meet each other's gaze. She has it! Sora thinks to himself. He is prepared to watch his pupil unleash what she has learned. I'm not the same girl as I was before! She finishes her thought, before activating Polymerization, much to Masumi and the crowd's shock.

Sora notices that Shay is also watching, and he sees that Shay flinched when he saw Yuzu Fusion Summon. Sora smiled to himself. What's the matter,

Shay? He thought to himself in a taunting manner, before licking his lollipop.
When Masumi later summons Gem knight Brilliant Lady Diamond, she tells Yuzu that she can discard a spell to restore her monster's attack points to normal. (because it's attack goes to zero because she used Brilliant Fusion) Since Masumi doesn't have a spell card, she runs off to find an action card. Realizing that she needs to stop Masumi, Yuzu chases after her. She tries to activate a card that will inflict effect damage onto her to distract her, but Masumi, with her anime logic athleticism, manages to take the hit, grab a pole, and swing around to find an action card while landing safely on a bridge. The action card she got was a spell, so she discards it and Lady Diamond gets its attack points back. It attacks, throwing Yuzu off the bridge, but she manages to save herself.
Yuya and his friends comment about how dangerous the field is, and wonders if it's even legal. I know that the solid vision system makes the bridges a physical being, but how far down is that drop? Or, is it an illusion, and they're not as high as it looks?
All Yuzu can do is set a monster and the trap card Fusion Cycle. If Masumi is the duelist I think she is, she'll try to end the duel with another Fusion summon, and walk right into my trap. If she doesn't,

then I’ll lose. She ends her turn, and Masumi draws. Lady Diamond’s attack drops to zero again, and the two race for another action spell. To distract Yuzu, Masumi summons Crystal Rose, which can be substituted for any Fusion material. She uses Master Diamond’s effect to allow her to fuse with one monster, which brings out Gem Knight Zirconia, which blocks Yuzu’s path. This gives Masumi time to find another action spell, and Lady Diamond gains her attack points back.

Masumi declares battle, which sends Yuzu running for an action card to save herself. She can’t run fast enough, as Zirconia destroys her set monster and sends her nearly rolling off the bridge. Masumi declares that she will win, as Yuzu’s only monster is gone. She attacks directly with Lady Diamond, but Yuzu activates Fusion Cycle. It summons a monster used for a Fusion summon from an opponent’s graveyard, so Yuzu’s only option is Crystal Rose. However, due to it having low attack points, she takes a hit to her life points, leaving her at 100.

Masumi ends her turn, saying, “how lucky for you that I Fusion summoned this turn.” Yuzu retorts, ‘it wasn’t luck. You’re so predictable. I knew you’d try to end the duel with another Fusion summon. Your pride as a Fusion user is what prevented you from beating me last turn.’ Masumi snorts. “You’re quite

talkative for someone who survived by the skin of your teeth. Please try and do something useful this turn instead of barely scraping by." Yuzu nods. "I plan to!"

Yuzu has a flashback of Yuya telling her "I really am proud of you for making the effort to improve your dueling skills, but… Your father and I have been worried about you. You seem off lately, and you've changed so much already. I'm worried that your time with Sora will change you for the worse." The scene transitions to a different flashback, this time, it's of Yuto telling her "There is nothing wrong with changing yourself to get stronger; and if that involves using that card to protect your friends, then so be it." In the present, Yuzu narrows her eyes. Yuya wants me to stay trapped in the past; with him… But… I just can't. I have to get stronger, and if Yuya wants to stay in the shadows of the past, then so be it; but I'm done with that! I need to keep moving forward, with or without him! This scene not only shows the audience Yuzu's resolve, but it brings up two important points. The first being that she trusts Yuto and his judgment above Yuya's, as the two flashbacks contrast each other heavily. The second point being that she, like Gong, is tired of carrying Yuya's burdens on her shoulders. Considering all the pressure and confusion in her

own life recently, carrying around Yuya's sorrows is too much to bear. After Gong and Yuya's duel, Yuzu opened her eyes to this, and resolved that she won't be Yuya's comforter anymore. Unlike Gong, however, Yuzu needs some time to herself before adjusting to being Yuya's friend again. She and him are still friends, but she's not very happy with him.

Yuzu draws Soprano, and uses its effect to Fusion summon it along with Masumi's Crystal Rose. (Who's effect can substitute for a Fusion summon) This summons Bloom Diva, which attacks Zirconia. Masumi takes the battle damage Yuzu would've taken, which reduces her life points to 1000. Masumi activates Brilliant Spark, which will inflict damage to Yuzu based on Zirconia's attack. Yuzu responds with a counter trap that allows her to attack with Bloom Diva again. Masumi runs off to find an action card, and Yuzu races after her.

Masumi grabs onto a pole and slides down it to reach the action card on it, but Yuzu makes a daring leap for it, despite the fact that it involves her leaping off the bridge. In an anime logic moment, she grabs it before Masumi without head-butting the pole, and Bloom Diva catches her before she falls. Shocked, the audience starts clapping at this bold move. Masumi comments, "you're crazy! If your monster hadn't caught you, you could've died!"

Yuzu smiles. “At Yusho Duel School, training in different fields and riding your monsters is all part of the curriculum.”
Bloom Diva attacks Masumi, due to her not making it to an action card in time. This reduces her life points to zero, while also blasting her off the bridge. Thankfully, Bloom Diva catches Masumi, which saves her from falling to her death. Yuzu smiles down at her. Masumi blushes before looking away, trying to hide it.
The Yusho gang are happy for Yuzu, with Syuzo being overdramatic and hugging his daughter. Yuya goes to congratulate her by awkwardly shaking her hand, and she notices that he is blushing. She avoids his handshake by turning to Ally instead, which makes Yuya sad.
Sora thinks to himself, see that Shay? She’s a Fusion user now. He goes to look at where Shay was standing, but he has already left. This makes him mad. I can’t believe that jerk left before watching my star pupil win!
Later that day, after the day’s dueling is over, Masumi calls Yuzu over to speak to her alone. She apologizes for her attitude always changing every time they meet up, and confides that there is a “strange hole” in her mind where she can’t remember something. Yuzu tells Masumi about her

duel with Shay, which makes her remember everything in a flashback. Masumi apologizes again, and says ‘I promise I’ll be a more reliable person from now on.’ She tells Yuzu to keep winning, as she doesn’t want to be known as someone who lost to a person who loses early. Masumi gives Yuzu Crystal Rose, saying, “I want you to keep shining like you did in our duel today.” This makes Yuzu happy that Masumi finally acknowledged her shine, and she hugs her. This makes Masumi uncomfortable at first, and she frowns while blushing, before walking off. “I promise I’ll keep winning! And don’t worry, we’re still rivals!” Yuzu calls after her.

The audience is supposed to see this episode as a way of setting up a love triangle, with Yuya and Masumi both seemingly developing crushes on Yuzu. (Yuya is implied to have liked her since the start of the show) I guess the audience will see who Yuzu ends up with…

20. Origins: Gong Strong

The episode starts with Gong Strong as an 8 year old in his dojo. We learn that he will inherit the Dojo one day, and that he must hone his skills as a duelist to prove himself, as he is the last “chosen one” of the Strong household.

There is a time lapse of Gong learning the Strong philosophies. The most important one being, “self-preservation above all else.” Survival is important to the Strong’s philosophy, as in the past they have been on the verge of extinction for generations. “Before any heroics, choose to survive. You cannot be the honorable warrior you strive to be if you are dead.” This theme of self-preservation doesn’t just apply to survival, either. In the Strong philosophy, this also relates to putting your physical and mental well-being above another’s, especially if the other person isn’t a Strong. Keeping the clan alive is the top priority, and any attachments that distract from this are forbidden. This serves as foreshadowing for how Yuya and Gong’s eventual friendship goes against his family’s beliefs.

Another point of the Strong philosophy is being “heavystrong,” i.e remaining grounded and focused

on yourself and your surroundings. The audience recognizes how Gong incorporates this philosophy into dueling style.

Later, we see Gong meet Yuya for the first time by protecting him from a bully, the same one that Gong is meant to face in his duel in the present. He and Yuya become friends after this.

Unfortunately, Gong knows that his father and clanmates will not approve of his friendship with Yuya. After all, he is constantly sticking up for Yuya and putting his needs before his. Due to this, he doesn't tell his clanmates about Yuya.

Since Gong can't invite Yuya to his home, he goes to Yuya's house. He meets Yoko and Yusho. He also becomes friends with Yuzu through Yuya. They all become a trio.

A time jump happens, and now Gong and Yuya are both 11. This is right after Yusho's abandonment. There is a time lapse of Gong comforting Yuya on multiple occasions, particularly by the bridge where he is seen comforting Yuya back in episode 2. The time lapse shows years passing where he is constantly having to comfort Yuya, and stand up to bullies for him.

While Gong doesn't mind it at the time, we see him back at his dojo being exhausted and unfocused. (By this point he's 13) His father remarks how Gong's

progress has slowed compared to when he was younger, and asks what happened to him. Gong, still not wanting to tell his father about Yuya, just shrugs it off and says he doesn’t know.

We see how Yuya’s abandonment issues are wearing on Gong’s mental well-being, and we as the audience feel bad for him, as we know Gong is trying to be a good friend. He is putting Yuya above his clan, which we know isn’t the right choice, but we can’t help but sympathize with it. After all, a lot of people have been in a position where a person they love won’t be accepted by their family, or their relationship goes against everything they’ve been taught.

We see a scene where Gong and Yuzu are hanging out together, notably without Yuya. This shows that despite knowing each other through Yuya, they are good enough friends that they can hang out without relying on their mutual friend. It is also notable that Gong feels safe bringing Yuzu to his home, as he is not carrying her burdens like he is with Yuya. Gong expresses his concern for Yuya once again, which is a sentiment that Yuzu shares. He admits that it goes against his family’s beliefs, and that he doesn’t know what to do. Unfortunately, Yuzu tries to tell him that his bond with Yuya is more important than some pressure from dead people, but Gong notably

leaves out the details of his relationship affecting his mental health.

This is the point when Gong feels really pressured by his clanmates, (he's 14 now) and starts having a moral dilemma, one that he carries with him into season 1. Obviously, Gong's duel with Yuya helped both parties finally understand this, and they come to terms with how friends should act vs how they were together. It seems to imply that after this duel, Gong is still a good friend, but he is finally doing what he wants to instead of bearing Yuya's weight.

It is worth mentioning that in the flashback, Yuzu is only exposed to the bad things about the two's relationship with Yuya through Gong, something she tries to push to the side. Of course, we know that throughout early season 1, Yuzu tries to comfort Yuya a lot, but obviously, after her duel with Masumi and the confusion, this causes a rift between the two and she realizes that she needs to focus on herself and not Yuya.

The episode ends with Gong's dilemma.

21. Heavystrong

The episode begins with Yugo on his motorcycle, driving on the bridge that viewers will recognize as the bridge Yuya often goes back to. It's a short intro scene, but it is meant to show that Yugo has officially arrived in Paradise City, and into the plot.
The whole episode is basically Gong's duel with the bully, and having him reconfirm his feelings toward Yuya: about how he'll focus on himself from now on but still be a supportive friend. At the end of the duel, Gong wins, and he learns that he is able to find a balance in this, and a huge weight if lifted off his shoulders. When Yuya goes to congratulate him, he can feel happy when around him without being worried, or feeling that familiar weight from before that had been on him for years.
The episode ends with Shay meeting up with Yuto, and updating him on the situation. "My first duel is coming up… It's against the Fusion user." Shay said, showing Yuto the picture of Sora on his duel disk. Yuto's eyes widened. 'I've encountered him a few times. He was the one who taught Yuzu Fusion summoning.' Shay narrowed his eyes. "I'll admit, I wasn't convinced that she wasn't Ruri until… Until

I saw her Fusion summon in her duel today. Suddenly, I couldn't see her resemblance to Ruri anymore…" Yuto nodded in understanding. "That's what happened to me. I don't know why that is, or what the deal is with Yuzu's bracelet. There are a lot of unknowns about this Dimension…"
"By the way, I talked to Declan, and he agreed to let you be a part of the group. He said you didn't even need to participate in the tournament. I asked him why he made me participate, and his reason was that we already made a deal." Shay informed him. "That's probably for the best. I think it would be a wise move to have the public think that there's only one person from the XYZ Dimension." Yuto said thoughtfully. The two of them nodded in silent agreement. Since I'm dueling a Fusion user, I can interrogate him for information and then give him the justice he deserves!

22. Karma

The episode starts with a flashback to Sylvio standing in Reiji's dark office in the LDS tower. "I am sorry to inform you that your father has been carded by the XYZ user." Reiji says, and shows Sylvio the card. Sylvio stares at the card in horror, immediately breaking down. 'How could somebody do this to him? He's… he's the last parent I have!' Sylvio cried, holding his father's card, a tear falling onto it. "I'm sorry." Reiji says with the tiniest hint of emotion. The audience is led to the conclusion that he sympathizes with Sylvio's loss of his last parent, as both of Reiji's parents aren't the best.

"What do you know? Both of your parents are probably alive! And you're the president of the most prestigious dueling school! I'm just a kid!" Sylvio lashed out instinctively. Reiji closed his eyes. "My father abandoned me when I was young, and my mother was hardly the supportive figure that I needed. Believe me, I get it." This revelation shocked Sylvio, and led to a somber silence.

'I'm out of here.' Sylvio growled bitterly. "Sylvio… Please know that vengeance will not bring your father back. You must take some time to reflect, and

understand that impermanence is inevitable.” Reiji told him. “Shut up.” Sylvio hissed, as he left.

Back at Sylvio’s rich mansion, he is seen crying in his father’s room. He notices a gift box in the corner with Sylvio’s name on it. He opens the gift, and sees a crystalized pendant inside, which is what Sylvio wanted many episodes ago. He puts it on, a tear dropping onto it. That XYZ user will pay… He ruined my life! First landing me in the hospital, then killing my father… The last person who ever understood me! He will pay…

In the present, Yuya and Sylvio walk to the dueling field. Yuya notes that Sylvio looks angrier than usual, and doesn’t understand why. He tries to ask if Sylvio is okay, but Sylvio responds with an insult. Yuya tries not to let it bother him, as his main goal is to entertain the crowd. “Ladies, gentlemen, and people in-between!” Yuya calls out, as the duel starts. It’s important to note that Sylvio doesn’t hold a grudge against Yuya anymore, as it has been redirected toward Yuto. Plus, he has been too busy mourning his father’s death to care about his petty rivalry with Yuya. At this point, Sylvio’s only annoyed with Yuya because he’s a sore loser, but is really just indifferent toward him.

Yuya realizes that Sylvio’s deck has changed to Yosenju, which is an archetype known for its swift

attacks and swarming the field, but returning back to the hand. He also is shocked to learn that Sylvio now has Pendulum cards, which implies that the Leo Institute has managed to create their own Pendulum cards for distribution.

Yuya ends up beating Sylvio, and his initial reaction is anger, but he decides not to give in. Sylvio sees how happy Yuya and the audience looked, which made him sad. He gracefully bows and tells Yuya “if you ever want to duel again, I will gladly accept.”

Sylvio looked as Yuya waved at the crowd. He could see how happy he looked. Maybe Yuya has the right idea… Being a dueltainer might not be so bad.

While Sylvio is still depressed about his father, (and vengeful toward Yuto) it is at this point where his relationship with Yuya gets better. He starts to genuinely respect Yuya and subconsciously chooses to use his dueling to entertain others. However, his reason is simply just so he can be his true self, (and be extra) not because he feels he has to or because he’s a people-pleaser. Heck, Sylvio doesn’t even try very hard to purposefully make things more entertaining, as he knows that the duel will be interesting regardless. While it might be selfish for Sylvio to not try as hard as Yuya, we will see in the future that Sylvio’s way of dueltaining has something Yuya lacks.

The episode ends with Reiji in the VIP booth telling Claude to “retrieve Sylvio’s Pendulum cards. He won’t be needing them anymore.”

23. The Lesser of Two Evils

The episode begins with Reiji standing in an alleyway. Suddenly, Yuto appears in front of him. “I assume Shay has told you everything?” Reiji asks. Yuto nods. ‘I’m going to hide out until I’m needed.’ Yuto says. “That’s fine. I’d just like to inform you to keep an eye out for a screen; Shay’s duel is today.” Reiji tells him, before turning to leave.

Meanwhile, Nico Smiley announces Shay Obsidian and Sora Perse to the dueling field. Sora seems to be purposefully trying to win the crowd’s favor, much to Yuya and his mother’s amusement. Yuya and Yuzu are both nervous when Shay walks toward Sora, as they both have seen just how dangerous he is. Sora… Be careful. This guy seems really intense… Yuya thinks. Sora… You don’t understand what you’re in for. Shay can inflict real damage, and has caused so much destruction. Yuzu thinks.

Shay has a flashback to Claude giving him a Pendulum card, but he refuses, saying, “I don’t need that crap to win. I’m gonna beat this Fusion user on my own terms.”

In the VIP Booth Claude is annoyed with Shay’s attitude, but Reiji says, “it’s fine. I’m more

interested in Shay's iron will and steeled strength than seeing if our Pendulum cards work. Besides, Sylvio proved that our Pendulum cards were good enough." Claude turned to Reiji. 'He seems like such a typical, brooding teenager. What power could he have?' Reiji met his gaze. "You'll see. I have just the action field for him."

Nico Smiley announces that the action field is Neo Heartland City, which invokes a brief look of shock on both Sora and Shay's faces. However, unlike Sora, who's expression immediately goes back to normal, Shay's goes to anger. He clenches his fist with a look of pure fury on his face. Reiji notices this from the booth. Sora asks Shay if he's alright, but Shay retorts "you should be worried about yourself! If you really are the one I've been warned about, then you don't deserve any mercy."

The Yusho gang and the audience are mesmerized by the beautiful action field. "Wow! This field is so futuristic and bright! I wonder if it's inspired by an actual landmark somewhere?" Syuzo remarks. Yuzu narrows her eyes at her father's remark. If only he knew… Knowing where Shay has come from, but also being close with Sora makes watching the duel strange for Yuzu. Yoko yells to Sora that if he wins, she'll make him all the pancakes he wants. The Yusho gang all cheer for him, and join in whenever

Sora encourages them to.
Sora is disappointed by Shay's lack of interest in entertaining the crowd, but he shrugs it off. He, of course, starts eating a dum dum sucker. The duel begins.
When Sora starts off, the crowd is immediately on his side, especially considering how "cute" his monsters are.
Once Sora ends his turn, he tells Shay, "how about we both give our best performances to put on a great show?" Shay closes his eyes. 'A great show, huh? Dueling was once a great show for us, too. That's right… Whether they were children or adults, everyone enjoyed it without a care. It was a place where duelists of all types were adored by the public… Until THAT day. On that day, our enemies attacked without warning and turned our home into a battlefield. Nothing could've prepared us… They just showed up, wrecking our city and our lives forever. For my friends and I, dueling was no longer a great show; but a means to survive.' Sora looked at him in confusion. "What city? Who is this enemy you're talking about? And are you gonna make your turn? You've been rambling on for 3 minutes!"
If it wasn't for Yuto, Yuzu wouldn't understand any of what Shay was saying… But it weighed down on her. The fact that she knew, but all these people lived

in blissful ignorance, not knowing all the suffering Shay had went through. Yuto was right. We are pampered fools. She thought miserably. If Duel Academy hadn't attacked them, Yuto and Shay would be in Heartland right now, admiring those beautiful city lights that I'm looking at… and dueling for fun like we do… Yuto would still have his family, his house, and his girlfriend with him. Yuzu couldn't help but start crying. Yuya looked at her, concerned. "What's wrong?" He asked. Yuzu knew it was too much to explain to Yuya, and he wouldn't understand. 'It's nothing.' She said. Yuya looked unconvinced, but changed the subject. "Do you know what the heck Shay's talking about? I don't remember an attack ever happening here." Yuzu looked away. "That's because he isn't from here." She muttered quietly.

When Shay summons Vanishing Lanius, Yuya remembers seeing it before getting knocked out. He tells Yuzu about it, which surprises her.

At the end of Shay's turn, Nico delivers some interesting commentary: "so far, neither duelist has taken a decisive lead. I wonder what twists and turns this duel will take?"

When Sora activates Polymerization, Shay flinches, but the crowd cheers. Yuzu notices that Shay flinched, much like how Yuto did when she first told

him about using it. She looks down at the ground. It might seem silly to seem so frightened of a card from a children's card game, but if these people understood what that card did to Shay… She thought. Sora makes a big deal out of his Fusion summon, which just makes Shay mad. Sora claims, "everyone! You're about to see a full-fledged Fusion Summon!"

Meanwhile, from the stands, Masumi snaps, "what is Sora implying? That the LDS's Fusion summons are fake? Who does he think he is, saying words like that, when he comes from a run-down school that hasn't entertained anyone in years?"

Nico comments that "this match will be an epic one! Even with no clear lead, the tension is building up to be exciting!"

Sora comments in response to Nico, saying, "that all depends on Shay, doesn't it? You said that you wouldn't show mercy, but you'd better start trying now. I wonder, are you too focused on defending yourself so much that you can't find the strength to fight back?" Sora smiles while saying this.

Without hesitation, Shay responds to this, turning this seemingly innocent question into another commentary about his life that goes over the audience's heads. "At first that was the case. We could hardly manage to protect ourselves from such

an overwhelming foe. We didn’t have a military, or any organized resistance. We were just average people who were fighting in a battle; unprepared and with no training. We were so focused on just trying to save everyone, but it didn’t work. One by one, our loved ones were killed. We had to learn the hard way that the only way to emerge with no casualties was to win. Only those who bore a settled will to live would make it through hell!” Shay declared.

In the VIP Booth, Reiji clenches his fingers as he holds them together. Riley is the only one who notices, and gets worried because of it. However, she doesn’t say anything about it.

When Shay summons Rise Falcon and activates its effect, its wings catch on fire again. The audience is shocked by the sheer strength of Rise Falcon as it attacks. Yuya remembers how powerful its attack is, and how it sent him flying backwards when he got knocked out. Rise Falcon knocks Sora backwards, and it creates shockwaves that everyone feels. It also damages the staircase on the field.

Sora gets up, and says, “that was pretty good, I’ll admit. You’ve finally figured out how to get a reaction from the crowd… But you’d better get ready for some plot twists… And I’m sure you WON’T like the ending…” Sora ends this with a bigger smile than usual. Somehow, even after being

sent flying backwards, Sora still has managed to keep the sucker in his mouth after all this time. (and without choking on it!) The episode ends like this, because I don’t feel like removing ourselves from this duel, as it’s too epic to do that.

24. Blurred Lines

Once again, I'm immediately starting the episode right where we left off because I'm not taking any attention away from it.

When Sora summons Frightfur Leo, its blades rip out of Leo's skin, which makes the little kids in the crowd scared.

When Frightfur Leo attacks, Shay grabs onto his Rise Falcon and it flies off. Frightfur Leo throws blades at the Falcon, but Shay manages to evade them by flying close to a particularly tall tower.

It is notable that any time Shay manages to evade Sora's attacks, he gets especially heated. Yuya and the gang worry that Shay's intensity is getting to Sora.

After Rise Falcon attacks Sora again, this causes him to lose his sucker.

When Shay uses his rank up magic card, Reiji is surprised. It's implied that he had no idea that XYZ monsters could do that. In fact, everyone in the audience had no idea that was a thing.

Sora tells Shay, "you're really making things interesting… But let me enjoy this more!" Shay narrows his eyes. "Enjoy? What you will experience

next won’t be joy. It will be death and defeat!”
Later on, the camera pans to the little kids in the audience, who used to enjoy this duel thanks to the cute monsters. Now they’re terrified, because Sora’s Fusion monsters are scary, and because of the increasing destruction of the beautiful Heartland City field spell. A lot of the field is in flames, and Shay looks up at it for a second and grimaces.
Once Shay attacks Sora with Blaze Falcon, the blast knocks Sora into that one particularly high building. This impact creates a large crater in the building, which sends it falling down toward Sora. Yuya warns Sora from afar. With anime logic athleticism, Sora jumps from the pieces of falling debris to get out of the fall zone, shocking everyone. He manages to land safely with a smile on his face as he dramatically walks forward as the building behind collapses. (this is reminiscent of some movie trailer where the main character walks out from an explosion)
After this, Shay asks, “where did your grin go?” (some time passed between the last bullet point and this) Sora clenches his fist. “Do you see now what it is like to be hunted? To be backed into a corner with no hope of escaping? You and your Duel Academy soldiers always laughed in our faces as they killed the ones we loved. But we are no longer helpless

prey waiting to be hunted! We are the hunters now!" Shay yells dramatically.

At this moment, Sora laughs at him and says, "you think I'm through? You think I'm one bit worried about losing to you? If you do, you're a bigger sucker than I thought you were!" As he says this, he grabs a lollipop out of nowhere and bites down hard on it. It is important to notice that Sora's expression is extremely exaggerated, but the audience soon realizes that his face actually just looks crazy. 'Poor Shay! Still thinking that you have a chance! Well, here's a reality check!' Sora eats the rest of it in one bite after saying this. "You're going to lose! It's the one thing you're good at. Isn't that right, Shay? You were no match for us when we attacked you and you're no match for me now!"

In the audience, everyone is shocked by Sora's sudden harsh words. "What's going on with Sora? Does he know Shay?" Yuya asked. Yuzu understood immediately, and her stomach dropped. Sora's from… Duel Academy? He was part of the attack on Heartland that killed millions? He's part of the reason Yuto and Shay are like this…? She couldn't believe it… She didn't want to believe it. How could Sora do something so horrible? Yuzu thought back to all the fun times she had with Sora, and how innocent he seemed, and how he taught her Fusion

summoning. He was a Fusion user all along… That's why he taught me Fusion Summoning… That's why Yuto was so hostile toward him. I'm sorry Yuto… How could I have become friends with someone who murdered so many innocents? Yuzu thought miserably.

Yuzu Looked toward the crowd. None of them know what Shay and Sora are talking about, or what they're involved in. They're confused, yet scared… But they're in blissful ignorance. Not even my friends know…

Sora continues the duel with a crazed look on his face. After Frightfur Chimera battles Shay's Blaze Falcon, Sora asks, "do you get it now? You'll never be the hunters. You will always be the prey to Duel Academy!" After a moment of silence, Shay declares, "Ridiculous. The resistance always prepares for a worst-case scenario."

Meanwhile, Yuto is seen out in broad daylight (outside of an alleyway for once) and without his cape, staring at a screen streaming Sora and Shay's duel. He is able to hear Shay's words.

"We take into account the possibility of any of our comrades being captured or carded. But no matter what, we always take back our comrades." Shay declares, with a fierce look of pure hatred on his face.

As Shay's Revolution Falcon activates its effect, it drops bombs down onto the field. "Burn and scatter in the flames of revolution!" Shay yells. The bombs drop onto Neo Heartland City, causing mass destruction and devastation.

Yuya gets up and yells from his seat, saying how this isn't how dueling is supposed to be used for. He is absolutely horrified that Sora and Shay could possibly use his favorite card game for such mass destruction. Frightfur Chimera lights up in flames. The bright lights from the city are all broken and destroyed, and the buildings have crumbled. It now resembles the current Heartland city.

Sora leaps toward an action card, but is distracted by a falling building. It lands on top of him, causing the duel to end. (Technically Shay won because Sora took effect damage before he got to the action card, so sorry if that made it sound like a dnf result)

The awful sight of the action field disappears, leaving the plain old dueling field back to normal with no damage whatsoever. The crowd is stunned, even the adults. Nico emerges from under a table in fear, and announces the winner.

Shay approaches Sora, about to card him, but he hears Reiji's voice through the duel disk. "That's enough. You can't make a move like that in the eyes of the public. You will be disqualified and arrested,

and won’t get your revenge. Don’t blow it now.” This convinces Shay to spare Sora, and he walks off the stage with his normal stoic expression, as if he didn’t just beat up a kid. As he leaves, Sora tries to get up, saying “No way I could lose to an XYZ scum…” Shay ignores this and continues walking. “Wait! Don’t leave! Please! Duel me again!” Sora begs, but eventually passes out from his injuries.

The episode ends with Yuya and Yuzu rushing down to help Sora, but security holds them back. The camera fades out to see a horrified crowd, devastated looks on everyone’s faces, and a battle-hardened Shay walking off nonchalantly. This scene is meant to show everyone’s shock at watching such a devastating duel. I mean, everyone came to play/watch their favorite card game, but to see it be used for literal war and to see it devastate a field (and turn a seemingly innocent kid into a psychotic killer) was absolutely horrifying to them. Perhaps the most tragic part about all of this is how Shay can walk away so casually, not regretting a single thing. It shows that Shay has become so hardened to violence and pain that causing so much destruction (especially to a place that looked like his home) and inflicting pain onto a 13 year old doesn’t bother him is very depressing…

Also, this might be obvious but I’m gonna mention

it anyway. The titles of these episodes obviously relate to something in the episode, right? (or have foreshadowing) The title of the last episode was “the lesser of two evils,” which, given you haven’t seen Arc-V before, makes sense. I mean, going into the duel, you think “oh yeah Sora is obviously the hero here.” I don’t blame you for thinking that. After all, up until this recent episode, he’s been characterized as this innocent boy who loves sweets. Conversely, Shay has been introduced as this mysterious warrior who keeps killing LDS students.

However, in this most recent episode, the title is “blurred lines.” This implies that the line between ‘good’ and “evil” has become blurred, as this is when Sora reveals his true nature and the audience bears witness to Shay’s retelling of tragic events in his life, making him easier to sympathize with. While technically neither of them are fully “innocent victims,” as they both have a lot of blood on their hands, it is clear that the roles have suddenly been switched on the viewer. After this episode, Shay is seen as the true “lesser of two evils,” while Sora is seen as the “true evil.” Personally, I don’t like using the term “evil” to describe characters, but I’m just using this as a simplification. It can be debated that Shay isn’t even a lesser of two evils, rather, he is a legitimate good guy who is misguided. An anti-hero,

even. However, the same cannot be said for Sora, and that hurts because the past season we've gotten to know him. Or at least, we thought we knew him, but he fooled us all. Character recontextualization really changes everything… It's a hard thing to pull off well, but when it is done right it is done right! It is at this point in the story when Shay becomes a character most people can genuinely root for. In fact, in the actual show, this probably was the point people started to do just that, (myself included) and to this day Shay is one of the more beloved characters among Arc-V's insanely large cast.

25. The Cycle of Hatred

The episode begins with Claude reporting to Reiji, saying, “Sora has been placed in our medical wards. He does not have any lethal injuries, and will eventually make a full recovery.” Reiji says, “move Sora to a different hospital. I have many questions for him… And make sure you bring his duel disk.”
Meanwhile, the Yusho gang are watching an unconscious Sora in the Central Park Medical ward. Everyone is worried, but Yuzu is in despair. Not because of his injuries, but because of his betrayal.
As the Yusho gang walks home for the night, Yuya, Gong, and Yuzu hang out together alone. Yuzu decides to finally tell Yuya all she knows about Shay: why he’s here, his backstory, and his comrade, Yuto. “Yuto?” Yuya wonders out loud. Yuzu nods. “He’s the one who looked so much like you… But somehow, he doesn’t anymore…” She tells both of them that Yuto attacked Sylvio, and that he was the one who kept disappearing whenever Yuya showed up.
In the dark hospital ward, Yuto is creepily walking through the corridors. (this is at night, too, which adds to the suspense) He opens a creaky door, and

finds Sora asleep in his hospital bed. Yuto creepily stands over him.
The scene cuts back to Yuzu explaining to Yuya and Gong. She tells them about how the Fusion Dimension is Shay and Yuto's true enemy, not LDS. "They only attacked LDS because they thought it had connection to Duel Academy." She tells them. Yuya questions why Shay was so hostile toward Sora, and Yuzu drops the bomb that Sora is part of Duel Academy. Gong accepts this fact sadly, but Yuya protests, saying, 'that can't be true! Sora would never hurt anyone!' Gong tells Yuya, "don't you remember? Sora always avoided talking about where he came from, and he always took pride in his Fusion abilities. He always seemed so odd. It makes sense looking back on it…" Refusing to believe it, Yuya says, "I need to hear Sora's side of the story" and takes off running for the hospital ward. "Yuya! Sora's unconscious!" Yuzu yells after him, but he ignores her. Yuya… You heard Sora's side of the story when he admitted what he did to Shay…
In Sora's room, he wakes up to Yuto standing over him. "I have some questions for you." Yuto says quietly. Sora's eyes widen as he realizes that this is the masked duelist who he fought with back at the harbor. 'Where is Ruri Obsidian?' Yuto asks him in a threatening tone. Sora, confused, responds "Ruri…

Obsidian?”
The scene goes back to Yuya running to the LDS hospital ward, where we see his thoughts. It can’t be! I won’t believe it. The Sora I know is the true Sora, I just know it! It all had to be an act, right? Some elaborate prank he pulled on us all? He tried his best to dismiss what Yuzu had told him. Sora… When I find you, I’m going to bring you back home and make you pancakes myself!
Back at the hospital, Sora yells, “I don’t know anyone named Ruri Obsidian!” Yuto narrows his eyes. ‘Do you know where Duel Academy keeps their hostages?’ Sora responds dismissively, “Duel Academy doesn’t ‘do’ hostages. Anyone who is taken was probably just turned into a card at a different location. Your little friend is probably dead.” Yuto’s expression turns to shock after hearing this.
Ignoring Yuto’s grief-stricken look, Sora demands, “where is Shay? I need to settle the score with him!” Sora grabs his duel disk from the side table. Yuto shakes his head. ‘The score has already been settled; you lost.’ Sora’s expression flashes to anger. “I would never lose to an XYZ scum! Those filthy vermin, cockroaches! Take me to Shay, right now! I’ll kill him!” Sora yells at Yuto.
Sora’s yelling attracted the attention of two guards,

who entered the room. In an epic scene, Yuto acts like Batman and rushes past them in an anime logic moment, only visible in a blur. His dark clothes make him hardly visible, and the guards have a hard time chasing him. It is implied that Yuto's experience in war has made him have these anime logic athleticism. (Same goes with Sora) The guards try to convince Sora to get back to bed so he can rest up, but he knocks them out with one punch and chases after Yuto.

Meanwhile, Yuya arrives at the hospital, only to discover guards surrounding the building. He overhears them mentioning how Sora escaped, and went in the direction of Central park. Not waiting up for Yuzu or Gong, Yuya runs toward Central park.

Meanwhile, Claude tells Reiji that Sora has escaped, and that their cameras are following him to Central Park. "Should I send a team to stop him?" Claude asks. 'No, we can't risk causing a scene right now.' The cameras in Central Park zoom in on Sora, and pick up another mysterious figure. "Yuya?" Claude gasps. Shay and Reiji correct him. "No, it's Yuto… A member of the Lancers." Reiji tells him. "He is also Shay's comrade… The one who put Sylvio in the hospital." Claude remarks that Yuto and Yuya look identical, but Reiji shakes his head. "I don't see what you see." He responds cryptically.

In Central park, Sora screams at Yuto to bring him to Shay. Yuto is standing on the stage, and turns around to face him. “Do you really want to duel Shay with those injuries?” Yuto inquires. “Of course! This time, I won’t lose. I will never lose again to another XYZ scum… They all are destined to be hunted! You, Shay, Ruri… You will forever be haunted by us!” Sora declares. Hearing Ruri’s name elicited a subtle angered reaction from Yuto and Shay.

Yuto once again demands Sora for answers about Ruri, and Sora says the same thing, only adding “perhaps she can somehow be freed… If you managed to plow your way through everyone at Duel Academy, which of course, is impossible for vermin like you and Shay. You’d have to get through all 10,000 of us, and that’s not counting the teachers, commanders, and all of the Obelisk Force!” Sora taunts. Yuto’s face turns to an expression of pure hatred, something the audience has never seen before. “If that’s what I must do to bring her back, so be it then!” He yells out, a hint of grief in his voice.

This moment is meant to make it clear to the audience that despite Yuto’s kindness and strong desire for peace and mercy, he won’t hesitate to hurt everyone at Duel Academy just to get his loved one back. He is more than willing to walk the path of

vengeance and perpetuate the cycle of hatred for the sake of others. This is an interesting note of tragic hypocrisy, as in this regard, he is both selfless and selfish.

This duality and moral dilemma in Yuto's character is something that will remain with him as the war continues. He is constantly being pushed into a corner and is having to choose between his conflicting beliefs, which can be overwhelming to him… And keep in mind, (as it is easy to forget) this is a 14 year old boy who has been forced to become a soldier in a war that was thrusted upon his peaceful homeland. Yuto is facing very real, depressing, and conflicting scenarios and emotions, something that is all too familiar for many war veterans in the real world…

Meanwhile, Shay tries to leave to go assist Yuto, but Reiji forces him to stay. "If you cause a scene, then that will bring negative attention to the Leo Corporation and will cause the tournament to be canceled. If the tournament is canceled, then our plan will fail. Don't let your emotions get the best of you… Yuto has got this covered." Reiji says. This convinces Shay to sit back down and watch.

Yuto duels Sora, and he uses the same dramatic flair as Yuya. Sora claims, "I'll prove that I can defeat any XYZ user, starting with you!" Meanwhile, Yuto

resolves, “I’ll beat you, and be one step closer to my objective!”

Throughout the duel, Sora taunts Yuto on multiple occasions. Yuto ignores him and keeps his cool, and focuses on the game.

Meanwhile, Yuya is still running toward Central Park and calls Yuzu. “I’ve tried calling Sora, but he won’t pick up!” He says frantically. Angry and exasperated at Yuya, (plus still bitter toward him for carrying his emotions) Yuzu lashes out at him for being ungrateful and forcing her and Gong to live in the past. “And all that without an apology? We’ve been here for you, but you care more about a mass murderer than us!” She yells. While this is obviously not the best time for an argument, the audience can understand Yuzu’s resentment.

Meanwhile, as Sora Fusion summons, Yuto and Shay both flinch. The audience can understand that this is an instinctive reaction from both of them, as their homeland was attacked by Fusion warriors who used that card to commit genocide.

Yuya hangs up on Yuzu once he sees Sora in Central Park. He finally sees Yuto for the first time, and thinks, wow! Yuzu was right! He looks identical to me! He watches from a distance. He doesn’t sound like me, though. It’s as if his vocal cords were fried after going through 10 years of puberty! He shivers

at the thought.
“My Phantom Knights will never fall; no matter how many times you destroy them. They always come back stronger. They are like the resistance.” Yuto tells Sora. Yuzu was right! He is part of a resistance… He’s so overly dramatic, though! I wonder if he hears himself speak?
After seeing Dark Rebellion’s brutal attack on Sora, Yuya can’t take it anymore and runs over to Sora. That attack was real! It’s too much for Sora to handle right now! Yuya is picked up on the LDS cameras, which shocks them. “Yuya and Yuto are both here… And they look identical.” Claude comments. No they don’t. I could recognize Yuto anywhere… Shay thinks, but he can’t help but notice how they have the same face shape.
Yuya asks Sora if he’s alright, but Sora snaps at him and says, “this is none of your business!” Yuya questions why he escaped the hospital, and what his deal was after his duel with Shay. Sora ignores him, staring up angrily at Yuto.
Yuto notices Yuya, and his eyes widen a little. Why does this guy look so much like me? He thinks. However, Yuto puts his guard back up, and tries to hide his shock. It is at this moment where Yuto sees an innocent party intervene in what he would consider to be a “battlefield” rattles him, and his

more merciful nature takes back over.
‘I know you’re holding back! Are you making fun of me? DO YOU THINK I’M WEAK?’ Sora yells at Yuto. Yuya tries to tell Sora to stop for the sake of his health, but he tells Yuya to shut up. “I’ll prove to everyone that I’m the strongest!” Sora growls. Yuya tries to reassure him, saying, “you can do that anytime, like in the next tournament… Just please…” Sora cuts him off. “No, it has to be in a real battle. I won’t have another chance.” Yuya’s eyes widened in shock.
Yuto agrees to this sentiment, but says, “I don’t want to harm you any further, even if you are the enemy. You’ve suffered enough. If you surrender, you can end your misery.” Sora takes this as an insult, as his experience at Duel Academy has convinced him that mercy is for those who are just toying with you. ‘You take me as some sort of fool, don’t you? What are you gonna do? Kill me? Kill me like how I killed your people?’ Sora taunted. Yuto closed his eyes, saying cryptically, “a large building can be brought down by a single anthill. You will be the first crack that is driven into the wall of Fusion.”
Yuya steps in to defend Sora, saying, “stop! I won’t let you harm my friends anymore!” This garners a shocked reaction from Yuto, as he remembers Yuzu’s drive to protect her friends, and his own

drive to protect his. This makes him consider the harsh truth that this innocent party is unknowingly friends with a murderer. ‘If you hurt my friends, then you have to go through me!’ Yuya resolves. The audience is left realizing that Yuya is not only fighting on the wrong side, but is being way more selfish and annoying lately. It is also important to note that Yuya uses “friends” plural, to imply that he considers Sylvio a friend after their duel. (because Yuto hurt Sylvio and now Sora)

26. Anticipated Encounter

The episode begins right where it left off, where Yuya is joining the duel.

When Yuya Pendulum Summons his ace, Odd Eyes Pendulum Dragon, he suddenly feels a wave of sharp, shooting pain go through his body. The source of it seems to stem from his mid chest region, so he clutches it. Yuya almost falls down from the pain, but manages to stay on his feet; albeit hunched over. The camera pans to Yuto subtly holding his chest too, but he doesn't have nearly as large of reaction as Yuya does to the pain. This implies that Yuto has developed a higher pain tolerance due to his experiences in war. (and possibly because his own dueling causes him pain)

While this is happening, Yuya and Yuto's dragons start to glow in color. Odd Eyes glows with a reddish pink aura, and Dark Rebellion glows in a cyan aura. Both boys wonder what the heck is going on.

Sora realizes that Yuto could've activated Fog Blade to prevent his life points from taking a hit. This makes Sora mad, as he realizes that Yuto had the will to take the pain just to perform an XYZ

summon. Reiji also comments that this was a “wise strategic move,” and the camera pans to show Shay with a neutral expression on his face. “Of course Yuto took the hit. He’s been in worse pain than this. He’s cunning in the heat of battle, and won’t hesitate to take more pain if it means gaining the upper hand, or for the sake of his comrades.” Shay comments, and Reiji understands that Shay is subtly showing a hint of pride in Yuto’s strength.

Sora pushes Yuya out of the way, insisting, “if you’re gonna make things worse, then go away! Yuto is my prey!” Yuya is shocked to hear this. “What do you mean by that? You said the same nonsense in your duel with Shay! Yuzu told me that you were a part of Duel Academy, the place that kidnapped Ruri. That isn’t true, is it?” He asks. Yuto and Shay react in shock to Yuya saying this.

Sora takes out a lollipop to eat. “I didn’t know that Yuzu was on the XYZ Dimension’s side… I’ll have to teach her a lesson.” Yuya and Yuto’s eyes widened in shock. This triggers deep anger within Yuya. “I won’t let you hurt Yuzu!” He shouts at Sora. All this time, I’ve been ignoring her feelings… No wonder she got mad at me! I should never have doubted her! Yuya couldn’t help but face the fact that he had treated Yuzu badly.

Later on, Sora’s duel disk starts to glow red.

Horrified, Sora begs “please let me stay! I can’t go yet! I can’t go back to Duel Academy! Don’t take me away…” Sora then disappears in bright blue light.

Back with Reiji, Shay, and Claude, Shay mutters “Sora went back to the Fusion Dimension where he belongs.” Reiji replies, “not by choice. It seems that he was forced to by some program in his duel disk that most likely was able to hear everything going on around him. Perhaps it thought that Sora revealed too much information…”

Yuya asks Yuto what happened to his friend, to which Yuto tells him that he went back to the Fusion Dimension. “Look, I know you through Yuzu… She’s been acting so unusual lately… She keeps avoiding me, and even lashed out at me… I can’t help but be mad at you for causing her to do all this!” Yuya admitted. Deep down, Yuya knew this was wrong, but he needed to take his anger out on Yuto; both because he couldn’t believe Sora was the enemy, and because he secretly harbored resentment for his doppelganger and how Yuzu seemingly “hung out” with him more. (I.e jealousy)

Yuto met Yuya’s gaze calmly. “I had no idea that Yuzu was avoiding you. I’m sorry for contributing to your problems…” Yuya was shocked at his sincerity, but he wasn’t quite ready to give up. ‘What are you

to Yuzu?' Yuya couldn't help but ask, his cheeks red. Yuto seemed to notice the blush, but didn't address it. "I'm not sure… But it's not what you think. I have someone dear to me that I'm trying to get back… So don't worry about it." He told Yuya. Yuya knew deep down that he couldn't be mad at Yuto, as his presence was so unusually calm and peaceful. It was as if being around Yuto made Yuya want to open up more, and he knew that Yuto would listen. He gives off such a trustworthy vibe… No wonder Yuzu trusted him.

"The only other thing I'll say to you is…" Yuto began. "Yuzu seems like a free spirited, independent person. She looks toward the future and does her best to work hard every day… Don't tie her down to the past." Yuya's eyes widened with shock. That's like what Yuzu told me! How much did she tell him about me?

Meanwhile, in the Fusion Dimension, an unnamed man tells Leo Akaba that Sora is in the hospital wing.

Yuto tells Yuya, "there's no need for us to duel anymore. We're not enemies. I will cancel the duel, and it will end without a winner." Yuya shakes his head. 'I want to hear the story from you while we duel.' Yuto is surprised by this. "Dueling is used as a weapon in the battlefield, not to get to know

someone.” He tries to tell Yuya, but Yuya ignores him. “I don’t care! In this world, dueling is a card game used for entertainment, bonding with friends, and making people smile! That’s how it should be!” He tells Yuto. Yuto’s eyes widened and shock. Those words… That’s what Ruri told me…

As they continue to duel, Yuto repeats the same points he told to Yuzu, about how his homeland was attacked by the Fusion Dimension and took Ruri. He goes into slightly more depth, however.

Yuto closed his eyes as he spoke, his voice shaking. “I still remember… Heartland used to be a place where dueling was simply just a card game. It was once used for entertainment, making friends, and making people happy… But one day, a portal opened, and a group of students with different colored jackets started summoning Ancient Gear monsters. They started attacking and destroying everything. The people ran as fast as they could, unprepared for the invasion. But they couldn’t run fast enough. The Fusion warriors mercilessly slaughtered all of them; even if they weren’t duelists. Not even the babies or elders were spared from the onslaught. I still remember… The look on every Fusion Warrior’s face whenever they would brutally murder someone… It was always a look of glee, and triumph. While this invasion was a fight

for our lives, to them, it was all fun and games. They were using us as if we were their playthings, and they made cruel games to see who could card the most people… It was awful… To think so many died at the hands of such terrible people, the last thing they ever saw were those monsters laughing at their pain and fear…”

Meanwhile, Shay slammed his fist into Reiji’s desk as he listened to his best friend talk about their shared trauma. Reiji seemed to be gritting his teeth in anger at hearing what Yuto and Shay went through. Claude didn’t say anything; instead, he had a look of horror on his face. Riley was silently crying, as she had a flashback to the war that killed her parents. (Riley was with Reiji, Shay, and Claude all along I just forgot to mention her)

As Yuto talked to Yuya about what happened, he could tell Yuto’s dueling was becoming more intense. He knew from Yuzu that it could inflict real pain, but he wanted to continue the duel.

“After about a month of fighting, the Fusion Dimension finally stopped attacking us. Our city was in ruins, our homes destroyed, and our family members killed. Everything was gone…” As Yuto concluded what happened during the invasion, he turns the tables on Yuya during the duel, and beats him. This causes Yuya to go flying into a wall,

where he collapses. Checking if Yuya is conscious or not, Yuto approaches him, but he is suddenly blinded by a bright light.
This bright light causes the cameras to malfunction, so Reiji and his group can't see what is going on. This angers Shay, as he recognizes the light as being Yugo's motorcycle light. He tells Reiji about Yugo, to which he responds, "interesting."
Yuto realizes that it's Yugo when he hears the motorcycle, and has to dodge it before it runs over him. "It's you! It's time to settle the score, you creep!" Yugo yells at him. This isn't the time to do this! Yuto thinks to himself. "I've told you before, I'm not the person you're after!" He tells Yugo.
Yugo ignores him, and starts racing toward Yuya. "If you don't duel me, then your friend here is gonna get wrecked!" Yugo threatens. This triggers Yuto. Despite the fact that he doesn't know Yuya very well, (and Yuya was fighting against him) Yuto understood that Yuya was an innocent party and felt bad for him. He was also partly biased because he knew this was Yuzu's friend. 'I'll duel you! Just don't hurt him!' Yuto said, activating his duel disk. Yugo smiled. "If you won't tell me what I need to know, I'll kill you after this!"
Before I move on to the next episode, I'm going to address the obvious: yes, I'm going to have Yuto

live. In the actual show, Yugo basically kills him. Since this is my version of Arc-V, of course I'm going to have my favorite character live. After all, to this day it still irks me that after all the build up they gave to Yuto, they killed him off so early on. Not only that, but nobody blamed or punished Yugo for it, and he got away scot free. Heck, Yuzu even has a point in time when she's hanging out with Yugo, much like how she did with Yuto, which just rubs salt in the wound. Not even she got mad at him for what he did! Since Yuto's screen time in the actual show is cut short after his death, (with his only screen time being as a ghost essentially) I will definitely be giving Yuto a lot more screen time in my version. I understand that there are several characters in Arc-V who are also underutilized and need screen time, but the characters I like who are underutilized come first. If Yuto getting screen time messes with someone else's development, I don't really care, because he deserves it.

27. The Will to Protect

The duel between Yuto and Yugo is pretty much the same, but with some major differences: one, Yuto's motivation for dueling is solely to protect an injured Yuya, (that Yugo threatened to kill) two, Yuya does not interfere, three, Yuto and Yugo don't go into Berserk mode, four, Yuto wins the duel, and five, (the biggest change) Yuto doesn't die.

Yuto and Yugo wonder once again why they look the same. Furthermore, Yugo wonders why Yuya looks like him, and thinks, what if he's the guy I'm looking for?

Halfway through the duel, Yuya awakens, but is too injured to move. Yuto tells Yuya briefly about their situation, reassuring him by saying, "I'm not going to let him hurt you again." This is, of course, a callback to Yuto telling Yuzu, "I don't want to see you hurt again." Whenever the camera pans over to Yuya, we get a glimpse into Yuto's thoughts on Yuya, which are much kinder and sympathizable than Yuya's thoughts on Yuto. Yuya has the same belief about dueling that Ruri shared with me… And I want to believe that one day it is possible for dueling to be used as just a card game again, but he

lives a life that I don't have anymore. It's easier for Yuya to say things like that, when he hasn't experienced the interdimensional war. Although, he reminds me of Shay a little. He gets stirred up so easily, and follows his heart over his head… Still, it's endearing. Yuya truly wants to make others happy, and I hope he can do that one day.

After taking several hits from Yugo's monsters, (and from the hits he took from his duel with Sora and Yuya) Yuto is struggling to stay on his feet. He gets directly in front of Yuya and duels while crouching.

"Yuto…" Yuya looks at the XYZ warrior nervously. He knows that Yuto is badly hurt, but is doing his best to protect Yuya. He notices that a lot of patches on his clothes have been torn, and that he's bleeding from several spots. Yuya sees a trickle of blood come out from the corner of Yuto's mouth, which he wipes away as if it were no big deal.

I can't believe what all has happened… From Yuzu yelling at me, to Sora being part of Duel Academy, to Yugo appearing, Yuto dueling to protect me… It's too much! Overwhelmed by all that's happened around him, Yuya clutches his Pendulum necklace to ground himself. He remembers a lesson his father taught him about "smiling through the pain."

In the end, Yuto uses Dark Requiem to finish Yugo off, and win the duel. This causes Yugo's motorcycle

to malfunction, and he gets off of it and faces Yuto. “I can’t lose and let you get away!” Yugo yells in anger, and he walks up to Yuto as if he’s going to keep hurting him.
Suddenly, Yuzu and Gong arrive in Central park to see this. Yuzu’s bracelet activates, and she, Gong, Yuto, and Yuya are teleported away, leaving Yugo standing alone in a nearly destroyed Central Park.
Conveniently, they are teleported to Yuya’s house. Yuzu is surprised that her bracelet didn’t activate again, considering that Yuto and Yuya are in the same proximity. She tries to adjust it, but it starts flickering weakly before giving out. “What’s going on?” She asks. Yuzu and Gong carry Yuto and Yuya to Yoko, and she puts them down on some mattresses.
‘Yuto, what happened?’ Yuzu asks, and she notices how much Yuto is bleeding. “I was protecting your friend from someone from the Synchro Dimension… His name is Yugo. He keeps mistaking me for the person who stole his girlfriend, and he tried to kill us both.” Yuto replied, before passing out. “Yuto!” Yuzu called to him frantically, but Yoko reassures her that his wounds aren’t fatal, and that he and Yuya will be alright. “They just need to rest up for a bit, that’s all.” She smiles.
The episode ends with Yuri standing on the bridge of

Paradise City, looking toward the city with an evil smile on his face. The audience is quick to conclude that this must be the guy that kidnapped Ruri and Yugo's girlfriend, as he also has the same face as Yuto, Yugo, and Yuya.

I would like to mention that Yuzu's bracelet flickering is supposed to imply that it's now "broken." This is my in-universe excuse for not letting the bracelet separate the counterparts anymore now that I'm letting Yuto live.

28. Origins: Yuto Ikari Part 1

Before I talk about the episode, I'd just like to say that I'm going to have an origins episode for Shay and Ruri as well. (individually) The reason I'm bringing this up is because Yuto, Shay, and Ruri's origins overlap with each other in the timeline, and it is up to you as the viewer to figure out the order of events in these episodes. I just thought that would be a fun little thing to do, while also giving more context to Yuto's life before the show began. Plus, we get to see Yuto's relationship with Ruri on screen for the first time!

The episode begins with Yuto getting ready for his first day of dueling school in the afternoon. (This is when he was 13) The audience notices that his fashion choices aren't much different from present day Yuto, just more clean and polished. (but still edgy and dark colored) His house is very futuristic and clean, with a neutral color palette. He walks down the stairs, and sits and eats breakfast with his mother, Kyoko Ikari. In contrast to Yuya, Yuto uses his table manners and engages in polite conversation with his mother. (and he has enough time to eat instead of quickly eating because he's late)

We see that the school Yuto enrolled in was Heartland's Spade Branch, which is known for training professional duelists. Its rival school, the Clover Branch, is also known for the same thing.

When Yuto arrives in a classroom, we get a shot of the large class of students. The camera pans on Shay standing next to a girl with long, dark hair. Yuto observes his surroundings, and concludes that everyone seems nice, much to his relief. The audience can glean that Yuto in this scene is very similar to present Yuto, but is more shy and reserved but is a happier person overall.

The teacher has everyone duel a random student in the class in a mini tournament to see who's dueling skills stand out. There is a time lapse of Yuto getting several victories with his Phantom Knights. Eventually, the teacher announces trios of students that act like the trios in Naruto, just without a mentor. The first trio the teacher called were the three who had the best win/loss ratio. "Shay Obsidian, Yuto Ikari, and Ruri Obsidian." He announces.

Shay and Ruri introduce themselves, and vice versa. Notably, the audience notices how much happier Shay is. He's overall much more energetic than how he is in the present, but he still has a hint of that passionate, dramatic flair that he will have in the

future. Ruri is introduced as a very pleasant, talkative, kind-hearted person. Yuto is happy to have ended up with these two, and he realizes that they are siblings.

The three are seen hanging out together as a trio outside of school. A time lapse of scenes go by where they're all chillin', and then we stop at a scene outside. They're doing a school group photoshoot together and Ruri brings them all closer, but Shay and Yuto are uncomfortable. Yuto is embarrassed by the picture, but Ruri tries to reassure him. "It's okay, I think you look great!" She smiles at him. He blushes and looks at the picture.

A scene happens where Yuto and Ruri are hanging out together without Shay. This implies that despite being a trio, they know each other individually well enough to function as friends one-on-one. Ruri is telling Yuto about her deck, which impresses him. "Your Lyrilusc deck is really good!" Yuto says, admiring her deck. Ruri smiles and closes her eyes, saying 'thanks! Whenever I play those cards I feel like I'm soaring through the sky! Pretty corny, right?' Yuto's eyes softened as he looked at her. "No, I get it. Relating and admiring the feelings of your monsters is something I do too. I wish I could be as strong and honorable as a Phantom Knight." He told her. "You are like a knight, Yuto. You're so

courteous and gentlemanly!” Ruri reassured him. Yuto didn’t know how to respond to that, so he just said, “oh, thanks…”

A scene where it is just Shay and Yuto at school together ensues, where Shay is hyped because he gets to duel Kaito, his rival and friend from the Clover Branch. He says, “the Clover Branch is facing off against the Spade Branch for the next few days!”

Yuto and Shay watch Ruri duel in the Clover vs Spade Branch school tournament. Yuto comments “her dueling is amazing” with a smile. ‘She’s been practicing a lot!’ Shay says proudly. Yuto is only half listening to Shay’s comment, as he sees a gust of wind make Ruri’s hair flow perfectly. Subconsciously, he can’t help but admire her beauty. “My sister has skills.” Shay says, snapping Yuto out of his haze. And looks! He couldn’t help but think.

In-between the tournament, Shay and Ruri introduce Yuto to their friends from the Clover Branch. Ruri introduces him to Sayaka (Saya) Sassayama, and Shay introduces him to Kaito Tenjo and Allen Kozuki. Soon after, the trio of Shay, Ruri, and Yuto develops into a whole friend group with Allen, Saya, and Kaito.

The episode ends with Ruri and Yuto having more scenes together without Shay, (in a park) implying

that they have started to become closer. “Hey, I’ll be rooting for you tomorrow!” Ruri says, smiling at him. “I’ll root for you, too.” Yuto tells her.
‘You know, I hope dueling always is like this.’ Ruri tells him. “What do you mean?” Yuto asks. “The bonds that dueling forges, the smiles it brings to others… I hope that never changes.” She says. “I guess I never thought of it that way…” Yuto admits. Ruri smiles again. “It’s okay, Saya recently told me about it. Her teacher at the Clover Branch school taught her this philosophy about how dueling should unite people, and that there should be entertainment duelists.” Ruri explained. “Oh, I’ve never heard of them.” Yuto said. “I didn’t either. His name is Yusho Sakaki.”
Before I move on, I’m just going to mention that when Ruri reveals that she learned about the philosophy from Saya who learned it from Yusho, that’s supposed to be a major record scratch moment. It’s meant to make the audience question, “wait, if this takes place a year before the show began, and Yusho left when Yuya was 11… Then, he was in Heartland? But where is he after the invasion? Did he die like Henrietta said? You’ll find out soon enough!

29. Origins: Yuto Ikari Part 2

The episode begins with Yuto and Ruri cheering on Shay in his match against Kaito. “Their matches always draw the most crowds!” Ruri comments. Yuto nods. ‘They’re both on another level!’ This makes her laugh, which makes Yuto think he said something wrong and he tries to apologize. “No, it’s nothing! You’re just such a supportive friend!” She explains. This makes Yuto blush and look away, which she notices.

On the way back, the whole friend group walks by Yusho Sakaki performing in the heart of Heartland City. Fireworks appear, and they witness Yusho maneuver on his monster and create speckles of light. Yuto notices how Ruri is stunned by how pretty the lights are. She’s right. Dueling should be used to make people happy. It is to be noted that Yusho has apprentice Dueltainers watching him, one of which is a ginger haired duelist with curly hair.

The ginger duelist has a short conversation with Ruri, and he tells her about his dream to be like Yusho Sakaki. She wishes him luck, and learns his name: Dennis McField.

That evening, Ruri and Yuto are seen on a bench

together in a park feeding pigeons. They talk about the results of the tournament, where Kaito won and Shay was second. “I’m so proud of Shay.” Ruri comments. Yuto agrees with this.

After they finish feeding the pigeons, Ruri says, “all that dueling today has left me exhausted! I could use a nap!” She lays her head on Yuto’s right shoulder, which startles him at first, but he doesn’t move. He blushes and looks over at Ruri, who is also blushing and pretending to be asleep. She’s so content and peaceful… I should just stay like this. I wish I could stay like this forever.

At some point later, Yuto is hanging out with his friend group. The Clover Branch students tease him about liking Ruri, to which he blushes and doesn’t deny it. “I knew it! She’s gonna be so happy!” Saya says. ‘Ruri’s… Gonna be happy knowing that?’ Yuto asks. “Of course she is! She’s liked you for a while!” Saya reassures him. “I mean, you two are practically dating already. You’ve been spending more time alone together and even when you’re with us, it’s so obvious.” Allen remarks. Yuto doesn’t say anything. “Hey, it’s okay, I’ll tell Ruri about it so it isn’t awkward.” Saya reassures him.

Later on, it is implied that Ruri and Yuto are now together. A montage of them holding hands and going on dates shows that their dynamic hasn’t

changed all that much. However, notably, Yuto gets nervous whenever he sees Shay around and tries not to engage in pda around him. “Why don’t you want Shay to see us together?” Ruri asks him. ‘I don’t think he’ll react well. I don’t think that he thinks that I’m the right one for you.’ Yuto admits. “I’m sure it’ll be fine! You two have been friends for a while! Besides, it isn’t his choice who I date!” Ruri tells him enthusiastically.

The two are shown back at the park sitting on the bench together. “I really enjoy hanging out with you.” Ruri admits, and she holds his hand. She tries to cup his cheek, but he seems shocked. ‘Oh, I’m sorry! Did you not want me to… “Ruri starts to ask.” No! I’m fine with it, you just… Took me by surprise.’ Yuto told her. He was blushing. “Well, then you’d better get used to me comforting you!” Ruri declared. “I will.” Yuto promised. Ruri suddenly planted a kiss on his forehead; and this time, he didn’t flinch. “Did you like that?” She teased. Yuto couldn’t find the words to respond; he was speechless being blessed in the presence of this gorgeous angel. He simply nodded, and gazed into her eyes. The scene transitions after this, implying that the two probably kissed on the lips and started to get physically affectionate with each other.

Later on, the friend group is hanging out together at

the mall. They are all talking about their last names. (Which seems like a random subject but it's what friends would talk about) "I don't like my last name…" Yuto admits. 'I guess that's fair. It means 'wrath' and 'anger,' and I can't picture you like that at all! You're too kind-hearted for that.' Shay points out. "Yuto Ikari… Nah, you're right, it doesn't fit his character." Allen agrees. "Well, you know…" Saya begins. "He may as well be Yuto Obsidian." A look of shock spreads across Shay's face when she says this. He notices Ruri holding a blushing Yuto's hand. "Ohh! Why didn't you tell me you were dating?" He asked. Shay wasn't upset like Yuto anticipated. "I'm sorry… I didn't want to ruin our friendship." Yuto apologized. Shay reassured him that it was all good. "It's fine! I know you'll be a good partner for my sister! I hope you do become part of the family one day! Then we can go on vacation together and do all sorts of things!" Shay tells him. Yuto smiles. He was relieved that Shay approved of him.

A time skip ensues, and Yuto and Ruri are walking through the center of Heartland City together. Suddenly, they hear screaming and they see people running past them. "What's going on?" Ruri asks them. 'There are duelists invading! They're summoning monsters that are able to cause real damage!' A random unnamed character cries.

Shocked, Yuto and Ruri exchange glances. “We have to find our friends and family and get somewhere safe!”

30. Origins: Yuto Ikari Part 3

They agree to meet somewhere, and they split up. Yuto runs to his house, and sees giant Ancient Gear Monsters from a distance destroying the city. When he arrives, he is shocked to see his house destroyed. He sees his mother's body underneath the debris, and is horrified to see her bleeding out. Yuto knows she is dead, but tries to talk to her. Before he is able to, a blast of light flashes in front of him, and an explosion occurs.

Yuto awakens in a sheltered area with Ruri and his friends around him. They fill him in on the situation. "They're from the Fusion Dimension and can make damage real. I've never seen anything like this…" Kaito says while gritting his teeth. Yuto tearfully explains what he witnessed, which shocks everyone. 'They won't get away with this!' Shay declares angrily. "We've organized a resistance group of the survivors who can duel, and we're going to take back our city!" Kaito says.

Once Yuto has recovered, he and Shay lead a squad of duelists out into the battlefield. Yuto witnesses another horror: the Fusion Warriors can turn people into cards. Yuto observes his surroundings. He is

shocked to see Heartland City on fire, with several buildings crumbling as Ancient Gear Golems knock things down. Just seeing the destruction, and people running almost overwhelms him, but Shay keeps him focused. They are forced to retreat when the Fusion Warriors summon multiple Ancient Gear Golems. Yuto looks behind as he runs, and sees the duelists gleefully laughing as they card the resistance duelists, which horrifies him.

Back at the lair, Yuto and Shay tell their friend group the horrors they have witnessed. They have them rest up as they have been through enough, and Kaito organizes a squad of the remaining Clover Branch duelists to fight back.

A montage of the invasion ensues, where it is implied that the attacks last for several weeks. During one attack on the Fusion Warriors, we see Yuto again, this time in his present day attire. He also has his present day stoic, battle-hardened look. Unlike in the previous scene, he no longer looks outwardly afraid. We see him take down several Fusion Duelists, and tries to ask them why they are attacking. They refuse to answer and retreat.

In a new scene, Yuto has just destroyed an Ancient Gear Soldier. He turns to hear Ruri’s voice in the ensuing chaos. She is seen hugging a little girl who has lost her parents, and yells out, “dueling isn’t

supposed to be used like this! Dueling should make people happy!" Hearing this makes Yuto freeze up, and he has a somber look on his face. I hate this! I hate seeing that look on her face… How could these monsters cause Ruri and everyone such despair?

Suddenly, a Fusion Warrior summons an Ancient Gear Hound to attack Ruri and the little girl. Ruri quickly pulls out her cards and defends the girl. She manages to "win" the scuffle between the two monsters, and her Lyrilusc card relentlessly attacks the Fusion duelist. 'Stop! I don't want this!' Ruri cries out. Yuto activates Fog Blade to stop her monster from attacking the student, but it's too late. The Fusion Warrior is dead. Ruri looks at the body in horror, realizing that she did this. Yuto embraces her as she cries, his heart breaking at hearing her despair. "I… killed him… I'm a monster… I didn't want to do it! Why does it have to be like this?" Yuto couldn't find the words to answer, because he knows that the truth will upset her, and also because he didn't want to believe it himself: in this new reality, it's kill or be killed. Yuto's stomach sank. Dueling has become a weapon; a means to survive… The card game that my friends and I once enjoyed… It's hardly recognizable now…

Back at the lair, Ruri clung to Yuto's shoulder, still in a daze after accidentally killing the Fusion duelist.

They had brought the little girl with them, who was further traumatized after watching a murder.
“What happened out there?” Shay demanded. ‘I… killed a Fusion Warrior… I’m a monster.’ Ruri told her brother. He gave her a hard glare. “You are not a monster. The Fusion Warriors are. You did what needed to be done to protect this girl. Something like this was bound to happen sooner or later…” Shay told her coldly. “What do you mean? I’m awful! I killed someone, Shay! Someone who had a life: a family, a home, friends… They’ll never have that again! I took that away from them! I have blood on my hands that can’t be washed off!” Ruri cried. Yuto held her tightly, but didn’t comment. Hearing his two best friends argue on the dilemmas of war just made him feel worse.
“You can’t dwell on those things, Ruri!” Shay suddenly snapped. ‘I can’t forgive myself.’ Ruri told him. “If you spend one second hesitating during a battle, that can be a matter of life and death. Are you willing to throw your life away, thinking that you’ve done the right thing, while the friends you could’ve protected are slain?” Shay demanded. This triggered something in Yuto; he couldn’t explain what it was. Perhaps deep down, he wanted to argue against Shay’s harsh words, to protest and say, “there has to be another way,” but he knew Shay was right.

Arguing against a harsh truth would just make things more bleak and depressing. It would be hopeless. Despite that, he spoke up.

“There is nothing wrong with doing what is right. Taking on responsibility and accepting your faults is what makes you human.” Yuto defended. Shay’s eyes narrowed at his best friend. ‘Are you willing to let us die just so you can be the hero?’ He asked. “We’re stronger than that. We’ll protect each other so nobody gets left behind.” Yuto insisted. “What makes you so sure of that? We could be killed at any moment!” Shay yelled at him. “You and Ruri’s soft-hearts are going to lead to your demise! Do you realize how selfish you two are being? Do you not see how much your deaths would hurt the people around you?” A brief moment of despairing silence passed between the trio of friends, making them all realize how far they’ve fallen. Rain started to pour, and thunder rumbled in the background as no one spoke. So much has changed between us… Just a month ago, we wouldn’t be having this argument. We’d be hanging out together and enjoying the peace in our lives…

Shay turned to leave, a hint of sadness in his eyes. Ruri crouched to the ground and cried more, prompting Yuto to hug her tightly. “What did we do to deserve this?” She asked tearfully. Seeing her in

despair had been weighing on Yuto's heart, but this question broke him. Despite spending weeks subconsciously hardening his heart to avoid further pain, there was one person who could still make him feel again. "I love you. We're going to get through this together, no matter what anyone says. I promise." Yuto said, a tear running down his cheek. He caressed her cheek to comfort her.

Yuto knew it was foolish to make such a promise during an interdimensional war where you could die at any time, but at that moment, he just wanted to do anything to make Ruri feel better… Because Ruri was the only one who could give him happiness; as she was the last thing he loved that was still here, safe in his arms. She was the only one who could give him a glimmer of hope in these dark ages. Because without Ruri, Yuto knew he would fall apart. He would lose himself entirely, and no longer feel anything. And that thought scared him. Yuto closed his eyes and hugged her tighter. "We'll get through this together." Tears ran down the soldier's cheeks as he reassured Ruri with hollow words. "I promise."

A time skip occurs, and it is fast-forward to when Duel Academy has stopped invading. Yuto and Ruri are seen comforting each other as they see the damage done to their city, but during this time they

see each other less. In fact, Yuto is distant from all his friends, due to them all wanting to help out in rebuilding, organizing the resistance, fetching clean water, and feeding the homeless. Yuto, Shay, and some other resistance members act as protectors of Heartland, guarding the city from further attacks.
The last time Yuto sees Ruri is when they get a window of time to hang out. “You’ve been doing so much lately… Are you sure you’re alright?” He asks her. ‘It’s fine! There’s just so much to do… I can handle it.’ Ruri tells him. Yuto gives her a look of concern, but doesn’t push it further. After all, her resolve to work hard at rebuilding the city while also caring for everyone in the shelter was admirable. “You know, we’ve both been working hard lately, and haven’t seen each other as often. I know that it’s selfish, but I really wish I could spend all my time with you.” Ruri admits. “I know, I wish we could too, but the people need us… But I’ll carry these moments in my heart forever.” Yuto tells her. Ruri smiles at him. “Once the city is rebuilt to an extent, and order is restored, maybe things will somewhat return to normal.” Yuto doubts her words, as he knows that the threat of another attack is looming in the distance. The only way to be sure Duel Academy won’t invade again is if we destroy them first… Yuto knows deep down that he’ll probably be forced

to go on a squad force with the rest of the resistance to launch an attack on Duel Academy, but he doesn't want to ruin the moment. "Of course. I'll always be here." Yuto tells her, smiling back.

A few days pass, and Yuto is seen scouting the broken debris. Suddenly, he hears Shay calling his name frantically. He rushes over. "Shay? What's wrong?" He asks urgently. 'It's Ruri… She's gone missing!' Shay tells him, fear in his gaze. A wave of fear passes over Yuto, but he tries to compose himself. "I haven't seen her in a while. Maybe she went out to fetch water?" He reasons. Shay shook his head. "I've already talked to the resistance. They said she went to fetch water, but never came back." Yuto's eyes widened in shock.

The days pass, but nobody can find Ruri. A scene jumps to Saya, Allen, and Kaito talking to each other. "I think one of the worst parts about our situation is what it's done to our friends. Ruri's gone, and Shay and Yuto aren't taking it well." Allen says. Kaito nodded in agreement. 'Even before what happened to Ruri, Shay had changed so much… He accepted the harsh realities of the situation for our sakes, but it changed him… And Yuto… I think he's changed a lot too, but if Ruri were still by his side, I think he would've been able to handle anything.' Kaito explained. Saya looked at

the ground. “Yuto’s been so withdrawn lately, and on the occasions I have seen him, he’s got this look of hatred in his eyes… Almost like Shay.” She said. “I heard he and Shay have been on a rampage in attacking Duel Academy students… Rather savage of them, if you ask me.” Allen pointed out. Kaito closed his eyes. “I don’t blame them. Ruri meant so much to all of us, but especially those two. At least they’re doing their jobs.”

The scene jumps far ahead to when Yuto and Shay are saying goodbye to the resistance. “We’ll be back with Ruri, I swear.” Shay declares. Yuto nods, and waves to the remaining friend group. ‘Poor Yuto… He has to deal with the loss of Ruri and dealing with Shay.’ Saya says quietly. “They’ll be alright. The two of them are a powerful force together.” Allen reassures her. Saya closes her eyes. Please, let the two of them be okay…

Whooo, that was an emotional three-parter. You all were NOT prepared for the rollercoaster of raw, intense emotions that was this three-parter. And trust me, you still won’t be emotionally prepared when we get to Ruri and Shay’s origins episodes. They will also be just as emotionally devastating.

Just as a side note, even though this is technically a three-parter, it can also be seen as just one “movie-sized” episode for Yuto’s backstory. This will most

likely be the case for Ruri and Shay as well; and once you see all three of their POVS, you can piece together the timeline and it'll be one big movie-sized episode of their combined backstories.

Also, even though it didn't make the final cut, Yuto has accidently and intentionally killed Fusion Duelists during the invasion. His reaction was similar to Ruri's, but Shay convinced him to basically "keep going and process what you've done later" so he wouldn't freeze up during battle like Ruri did. The montage was meant to imply that Yuto does have blood on his hands, but he isn't as fargone as Shay. He still holds onto Ruri's philosophy and does his best not to needlessly kill anyone. Yuto almost went to Shay's level after Ruri's kidnapping, but he stopped himself, and chose to remember Ruri's words and do his best to honor them. (This is why he tries his best to be merciful in the Standard Dimension)

So yeah, we're only on the 2nd origins episode and it's a doozy! Spoiler alert: most of these origins episodes are going to be sad. Backstories reveal a lot about a character, especially tragic ones. Alright, I'm gonna go back to the main story, but mentally prepare yourselves for these origins episodes to come back around every so often! ☺

31. Preparing for Battle

The episode starts with Yoko and Yuzu watching over an unconscious Yuya and Yuto. Yuzu keeps flashing back to the last things Yuya and Yuto told her before this point. Yugo? A Synchro Dimension… I guess that makes sense. If there's a Dimension for Fusion and XYZ, I guess it makes sense that there's one for Synchro. Yuzu can't help but remember how the last conversation she had with Yuya was her berating him on his treatment of her over the phone, which she felt bad about. God, it was such bad timing! Why couldn't I have waited? Yuya was already going through enough, and now this happened?

As time passes of Yoko and Yuzu watching the news of the Tournament on the TV, they overhear Yuya screaming. They both rush over to him. "Yuya! Calm down, you're safe!" Yoko reassures him. He stops screaming when he realizes where he is. "Where's Yuto and Yugo?" Yuya asks. Yuzu points to a newly awakened Yuto lying on a mattress next to him.

Yuya is relieved that Yuto is okay, and thanks him for protecting him. Yuto tells him, "you don't need

to thank me. It's my duty to protect any innocents from the battlefield." Relief washes over Yuya. 'You're not mad at me for defending Sora?' Yuto shakes his head. "It was clear that he didn't tell you his true intentions. You were just doing what you thought was right." He tells Yuya.
"About Sora…" Yuzu interrupts them. Yuya nods. "I know, I understand… We can't be friends anymore… But it still hurts." He admits. Yuto shot Yuya a glance of sympathy. Even though he felt Sora wasn't a good person and didn't deserve Yuya's friendship, Yuto understood how it felt to suddenly lose somebody.
Yuzu apologized for yelling at Yuya over the phone, and they all forgave each other. Yuzu updated Yuya on the major tournament events: Riley had beaten Ally and Fredrick, and was capable of using all summoning methods just like Declan.
Yuto then explains to Yuya and Yuzu how Declan had him and Shay join his group of elite young duelists to form a rebellion against Duel Academy. "Are there still spots left?" Yuzu asks him. Yuto looks at her in shock. 'I've already told you, I don't want you to get involved in this. This is our fight.' Yuzu gives him a determined look. "And I've told you that I don't want you to associate me with the lazy, ungrateful people in this Dimension!" Yuto

thinks about this for a second. “If you’re really sure, then I’m sure Declan can squeeze you in… But you have to understand the risks involved. Are you really willing to give up your comfortable life here, just for people you barely know?” Yuto questions her. “But I do know you, and I want to help. Besides, even if I did stay, I wouldn’t be able to stop thinking about how much everyone is suffering outside my Dimension without me doing anything about it.” Yuzu tells him. “You understand that you, Shay, or I could die at any moment, right? You’ll be forced to stay in this group for as long as the war rages on, either when we finally destroy Duel Academy, or we all die trying. Can you accept that?” Yuto presses on.
“I want to help you!” Yuzu insists. She can tell that Yuto wants to talk her out of it, but she doesn’t want to.
“Wherever Yuzu goes, I’m going with her.” Yuya speaks up. Yuto’s expression changes slightly as he stares at Yuya. He can’t tell what the XYZ user’s expression is, but it seemed the most like doubt. Then, it hit him. Oh… Right. I asked Yuto what he was to Yuzu… Yuya remembered with shame. That’s why he’s doubting me. Please don’t tell Yuzu about this… As if he read Yuya’s mind, Yuto doesn’t press further. “If you’re both sure, I can talk to Declan about it. Just be ready to leave everything

behind once the tournament has concluded. I recommend that you all say your last goodbyes to your loved ones while they are still around." He advises. Yuzu notices a sad look in his eyes. Suddenly, she understands, and it punches her in the gut. Yuto's emphasizing us saying goodbye because he never had the chance to prepare or say goodbye to Ruri because she was taken from him… Yuzu thinks to herself.

Yuya and Yuzu decide to head back to the Arc League Championship to reunite with their Duel School, and Yuto decides to leave on his own. "Why can't you go with us?" Yuya asks him. "It would be better for me to remain in hiding. Declan doesn't want news spreading of there being two XYZ users… Especially considering how Shay is the one people are after." Yuya and Yuzu understood what he meant. Even though neither of them had talked or known Shay personally, it was obvious to anyone how reckless and aggressive Shay was in his duels. With that, Yuto took off, running quickly like how he did back at the hospital ward.

Yuya and Yuzu reunited with their Dueling School. Syuzo and Gong were the happiest about Yuya waking up. Yuya and Yuzu filled them in on all that had happened.

Everyone watches the brutal match between Iggy

Arlo and Kit Blade. It ends in two turns, with Iggy winning, and Kit being carried away in a stretcher. This makes everyone nervous.

After the day's dueling is over, Gong, Yuzu, and Yuya get their opponents listed. Yuzu and Gong are facing off against unnamed characters that don't matter, but Yuya is facing off against Iggy Arlo, which makes everyone uneasy. Yuya resolves that he'll prove to Iggy that his philosophy of dueling is what matters, but Yuzu doubts him.

The episode ends with Yuto and Reiji talking in an alleyway. "Yuya Sakaki and Yuzu Hiiragi want to join the Lancers?" Reiji asks. Yuto nods. 'They seemed surprisingly adamant about it. I'm worried that they don't understand what they are getting themselves into.' Yuto admits. Reiji closed his eyes. "They will find out soon enough, I'm sure. Besides, you don't find duelists like them every day, so we may as well let them join." Reiji told him. Yuto gave a hesitant nod in agreement. They parted ways after this, leaving Yuto standing by himself in a dark alleyway. Yuya, Yuzu… I can't protect you forever… Please don't let anything happen to them…

32. Clash of Philosophies

The episode begins with Yuya about to face-off against Iggy Arlo. Syuzo gives the audience context as to what school Iggy comes from: the Bandit Warrior Academy. He explains that it is one of the most successful dueling schools in the world, only second to LDS. Supposedly, the reason for its success is its hard training. A montage shows elementary-high school aged students going through intense physical labor and training just to play a children's card game. If they lost, they were brutally punished for it. Their philosophy is "victory is everything; never lose sight of the given objective." This makes Gong think about his own clan's philosophy, and the Yusho school's philosophy of making people happy through entertainment dueling. Gong thinks about how he used to find the Yusho Duel School's philosophy inspiring, but thinks, while preaching beliefs about making people happy sounds great, it seems to be pressuring the students to become entertainers like Yusho. Not everyone who attends wants to be like him. It also seems to encourage only experiencing positive emotions, and pushing away anything remotely negative, especially

for the sake of others. Gong's doubts about the Yusho School's philosophy (and by extension, Yusho and Yuya's own philosophies) is why he isn't always thrilled at the idea of his best friend being like his father.

The duel begins with some arguing between the two duelists. Yuya courageously tells Iggy that he doesn't approve of his dueling style and philosophy. The crowd is shocked by this. This makes Iggy mad, and he retorts, "what right do you have to enforce your warped beliefs onto me? You don't know me!" This is meant to make the audience understand that while Iggy's philosophy and dueling style is harsh, it isn't Yuya's place to be enforcing Yusho's beliefs onto others. The scene is making it clear that Yuya is disrespectful to other people's beliefs, especially if they directly oppose his father's views. Furthermore, this is meant to make the audience realize that Yuya always reacts disrespectfully whenever someone has views that directly oppose Yusho, even if they aren't malicious.

Iggy has a flashback of him and his mentor walking through one of Paradise City's parks. Iggy is 10 years old in this scene, and he notices a 10 year old Yuya and his father smiling and having fun together. The mentor notices Iggy watching the two, and says, "dueling is not for fun. Dueling is for victory,

understand? If you don’t win, then you won’t become a professional duelist… And if you don’t become a professional duelist, then you won’t be able to live among the middle-class. For once in your life you must make your parents proud. When you see them at graduation, you’d better have known what victory feels like.” A young Iggy is then pulled away by his mentor with a sad look on his face.

This scene reveals many things. First off, it implies that Iggy joined the school in the hopes that he would make money, as it seems as though he comes from a poor family. This scene also shows that his parents are not kind to him, and will only see him once he has graduated. This also gives the audience context as to why Iggy is so bitter toward Yuya, as a lot of it stems from jealousy; Yuya had what Iggy wanted: a loving family, to enjoy his favorite card game, (without worrying about losing and the punishments) and a stable amount of money. When you consider it in this light, you almost can’t help but sympathize with Iggy, and be a little annoyed with how ungrateful and selfish Yuya is being.

I’d also like to mention that while Yuya started off as a sympathizable character, as the season has continued, he has become less and less likable. This was done intentionally. The reason being that in the

actual show, Yuya is a character that I have mixed feelings towards, but for not the best of reasons. I figured: if Yuya is already kinda unlikable in the show itself, I'm not gonna bother trying to make him any better. Rather, I'll just make him well-written, but still dislikable. Plus, even if I had tried to make Yuya more likable, he would still seem boring, flat, and not very sympathizable compared to all these other, already better written characters. With how Yuya's character is in the actual show, he's basically set up to fail in terms of characterization. My goal for this rewrite isn't to completely change a character's personality just so that they fit what I want; rather, my goal is to just keep Arc-V mostly the same, while fixing all the plot holes and bad writing choices. This is why most of the characters' personalities and development are mostly the same, and any changes that have been made only seem like major changes because the show never finished their characters' arc.

Anyway, back to the main story. Throughout the duel, Iggy and Yuya race for action cards. However, Iggy roughly pushes Yuya out of the way and is overall pretty aggressive with him. This is unfair to Yuya, obviously, but… You can't help but not root for him… I mean, can we as the audience really trust Yuya anymore? Especially when he keeps doing

contradictory things and is defending the man who abandoned him and many others? Furthermore, what is Yuya without his father's identity hanging over him? Because that's pretty much Yuya's defining characteristic. Even if you take Yusho out of the equation, what do you have left? A generic character, that's what. Because when you take out Yusho, you also take out what makes his character complex: the abandonment issues. Without that, he's just a generic protagonist who's less flattering traits become more apparent: distrusting of others, quick to judge, rushing into things recklessly, and being rather ungrateful. As you think about this, try to guess where Yuya's character will go from here.

As the duel goes on, Yuya very selfishly keeps pushing his beliefs onto Iggy, thinking that it will benefit him. Yuya gets increasingly mad throughout the duel, and isn't thinking clearly, saying things like "if you had gone to the Yusho Duel School, maybe you wouldn't be having financial troubles!" Obviously, Yuya is projecting; whenever Iggy makes a valid point about the flaws in his logic, Yuya takes a low blow at Iggy by mentioning something personal to him.

In the end, Yuya wins the duel. Notably, the tone isn't one of celebration or happiness. Rather, the show and the audience aren't happy with this turn

out. After all, in-universe, Iggy was the fan-favorite duelist. He was the runner-up the year before, and you can imagine some audience members even going as far as to dislike Yuya by holding the fact that Yusho never arrived at his match against him. The crowd boos at Yuya as he is declared the winner, and goes up to his Duel School. While they are supportive, Yuya feels down. He knows that that wasn't how he wanted the match to end up, and he refuses to accept the hard truth that people won't agree with his father's philosophies. The episode ends on this mundane tone. Despite Yuya's victory, he sees it as a loss; Iggy Arlo could've changed for the better, but instead he stuck to his own values and dignity. What a shame for him.

33. Encounter

The episode begins with Reiji learning that Dipper was absent for his match. Claude informs him that they detected a powerful Fusion Summoning within the time Dipper disappeared, which garnered a slight reaction from Reiji. “How interesting. All this time we’ve assumed that Sora was the Fusion user, but it seems that another has appeared.” He comments. Reiji and Claude decide to look at the security cameras around the city from the past three hours, and they conveniently find the right one instantly. They find the one and only clip that they need. In this clip, the two watch as a robed girl is seen with her duel disk out, approaching an injured Dipper. This seems to imply that she just won the duel. A crimson light emits from the girl’s sword shaped duel disk, which makes Dipper yell, “no! Please, I’m not who you’re looking for! Nooooo!” Once the light fades, Dipper is gone, and the only thing that is left is a card falling to the ground. The robed girl picks up the card to stare at it for a second, but then puts it in her pocket.

‘Wait, that looks like Yuzu Hiiragi!’ Claude pointed out. Reiji shook his head. “No. She may look

identical to Yuzu, but we know that Yuzu cannot turn people into cards. This is someone from Duel Academy… And I think I know who…”

Meanwhile, Yuzu is about to duel her next opponent. Her Duel School is cheering her on. Most of the episode is taken up by this ultimately meaningless duel, but I decided to include it just to give Yuzu some time to shine.

Back with Reiji, he figures out that the robed figure’s target is Sakuragi, the former Junior Champion and a potential candidate for the Lancers. How he came to this conclusion is left ambiguous. Reiji gets up out of his chair and starts running toward the Paradise First Stadium, and tells Claude to “keep an eye on Shay. Make sure he doesn’t learn that there’s another Fusion user. I’ll handle it.”

Later on, Sakuragi enters the back area of the stadium, and sees the robed girl. He asks her if she is the one who called him here. She doesn’t respond, and dramatically takes her cloak off to reveal that she definitely is not Yuzu. She challenges him to a duel, which makes him nervous. However, Reiji comes in just in time. “I was the one who called you in. I’m sorry about the unfortunate turn of events, but you can leave now.” He tells Sakuragi, and he obliges.

The formerly cloaked girl yells at Sakuragi to “get

back here and duel me!” Reiji grabs her arm and prevents her from attacking. He notices how this girl has a similar bracelet that Yuzu Hiiragi has.
The episode ends with this exchange: “Who are you? If you’re going to get in my way, then I’ll duel you, too!” The girl yells at Reiji. He narrows his eyes at her. “I am Declan Akaba, and I can assure you, I am no enemy. You ought to hear me out on this, as what I am about to tell you will change your perspective forever.”

34. The Prison of Duel Academy

The episode begins right where Reiji and the girl left off. “Akaba? You’re…?” The girl begins. Reiji nods. ‘Yes, I am Leo Akaba’s son.’ The girl is silenced for a second. “Do you not remember? I met you at Duel Academy three years ago.” Reiji tells her.

“You were the duelist that my father had his eyes on the most, but now you’re here. But for what purpose? Did my father send you here to lead the charge in invading this dimension?” Reiji asked her. This seemed to trigger something in the girl. ‘I came to this dimension of my own free will! The professor had nothing to do with it!’ She lashed out. “And I remember you now. Ever since the day you met me, I’ve been trapped in the walls of Duel Academy, while everyone else gets to have the freedom of going out to fight!”

A flashback ensues. The audience sees a 13 year old Reiji come out of a large cylinder that seems to have transported him to Duel Academy. He suddenly hears shouting, and he runs out into the halls to see three Academy teachers chasing an 11 year old girl.

Reiji follows them, and sees that they have cornered the girl outside of the school.
“The professor has given us orders to bring you back.” One of the teachers tells the girl. ‘But I want to test my abilities!’ She protests. The teacher shakes his head. “The Professor would never allow you to do that without strict supervision.” This makes the girl angry. “I don’t need that old man’s permission!” She snaps and activates her duel disk. “I’m getting out of this prison and doing what I want! If you get in my way, then I won’t hold back!” The teachers reluctantly agree to duel the girl, knowing that she is too stubborn to listen. They think that the only way to get her back is by force.
A duel ensues, and the girl shows off her Lunalight cards. Reiji, who is secretly watching the duel, ducks when he feels the shockwaves from the duel. This makes him realize that the damage is real. Fearing for the girl’s life, Reiji summons D/D Cerberus and attacks an Ancient Gear Soldier. Reiji tells the girl to follow him as his monster is distracting the teachers. The girl hesitates before running after him. Once D/D Cerberus disappears, the teachers are seen calling someone on their duel disks.
Reiji and the girl are seen racing toward the Duel Academy harbor. “Where’s the boat?” The girl asks

him. Reiji is confused by this question. ‘You aren’t from here, so you must’ve taken a boat to get here. Now where is it?’ She demands. “I’m sorry, but I didn’t take a boat here…” Reiji admits. “Then why did you drag me out here?” The girl asked angrily. “Why do you even want to leave? I hear that Leo Akaba’s the ruler of this prestigious duel school! Why would you want to leave that behind?” Reiji asks her, a hint of emotion in his voice. (Keep in mind, this was around the time Leo left Reiji and his family behind, so he is somewhat projecting onto the girl) “You don’t understand! It’s like a prison here! I’m not allowed to do anything! I’m getting out of here by my own free will and grasping my own future!” The girl retorts.

“Your future is here, Serena.” A voice says. Reiji and Serena notice that Leo Akaba and some Obelisk Force have arrived. ‘Father!’ Reiji yells out. Leo ignores his son’s outburst; as if he weren’t even there. Instead, he turns toward the girl. “I know you and your abilities better than anyone else.” Leo tells her. “If that’s the case, why do you keep me trapped here? Wouldn’t it be better for you to see what I can do?” Serena asks. Leo shakes his head. “Now isn’t the time.” Serena grits her teeth. “When will it be time? When you invade XYZ or Synchro? I’ve heard rumors that you were planning an invasion at

some point in the future! If I show you that I am worthy, won't you put me on the invasion squad when the time comes?" Reiji is confused by what Serena is saying. "I cannot let you join the invasion squad. Your place is here." Leo firmly tells her.
Not being able to handle being neglected for any longer, Reiji angrily cuts in. "What do you mean, you're planning an invasion? What is Duel Academy's purpose? You never said anything about what you were doing to mother or I, and just abandoned your company out of the blue!" Leo finally looked at his son, which slightly relieved him. 'Did you cross dimensions just to ask me those stupid questions?' Leo demands. "What do you mean, 'dimensions?'" Reiji asks.
Not wanting to talk any further, Leo orders the Obelisk force to strain Serena and Reiji. "Hey! Let me go! You won't get away with this!" Serena protests as she is dragged away. 'No matter where you run, I will always bring you back.' Leo scolds her. "As for you, Reiji…" Leo begins. "Declan!" Reiji cries out. "You're not anyone close to me anymore! You can't address me by my real name anymore!" Leo narrows his eyes at his son. "Fine then, Declan. You must return to your dimension."
"Where are we?" Reiji demands. 'This is Duel Academy, the place I am in charge of. This is my

base of operations that will heed my plans.' One of the Obelisk Force members attach something around Reiji's waist, and Leo explains that it will teleport him back to the Standard Dimension. "Stay in your world." Leo tells him. "I'm not done talking to you! You haven't answered my question!" Reiji yells. "The invasion is all for the purpose of uniting worlds." Leo responds vaguely. "What do you mean?" Reiji demands, but before he can say more, the device teleports him back.

In the present, Reiji explains, "for the past three years, I've been making preparations to crush Leo Akaba's ambitions. That's why I am the president of the Leo Corporation, and why I run the top dueling school in this dimension. The LDS was made to train the most powerful duelists who can one day protect all dimensions from Leo Akaba. I know that you have a personal grudge against my father, so I think you would be a suitable candidate for my group of duelists." Serena is surprised by the offer. 'Don't be ridiculous. I only came here because I heard there was a powerful XYZ duelist who took down one of the Academy's strongest students. If I found and defeated the XYZ duelist, then the professor would have to acknowledge my strength.' Serena took out a carded Dipper from her pocket. "My first target was a complete disappointment."

She throws Dipper's card, and Reiji catches it. "Dipper and Sakuragi may be XYZ users, but they are not from the XYZ Dimension." He tells her. This seems to catch Serena off guard, and Reiji sees a hint of guilt in her eyes. "Then where is the true XYZ user?" She asks.

Meanwhile, the scene cuts to Shay beating his opponent in two turns, and walking off the stage as if nothing had happened.

"A true XYZ user? I don't know one." Reiji lies to Serena. She decides to turn away from him and find the XYZ user herself, but he stops her. 'If you make any reckless action in my city, then you will be alerting everyone of your whereabouts. Not just in this dimension, but in the XYZ and Fusion dimension as well. Your reckless mission will spread the cycle of hatred to people on both sides.' Reiji warns her. "So what?" Serena snaps. Reiji narrows his eyes at her. "Leo Akaba will stop at nothing to bring you back, once he knows where you are. If you continue this, then you may be trapped at Duel Academy forever." He explains. Serena's eyes widen in shock, as she realizes some truth in his words. Serena knows that if she is trapped at Duel Academy, she'll never be able to prove herself worthy. She continues to walk away, but stops arguing.

Back with the Yusho gang, they are excited by how far Yuya and Yuzu have come. Yuzu teases him that they're "rivals now." Yuya tells her, "I wouldn't want it any other way," which weirds her out and makes him feel awkward. Why has Yuya been so weird around me lately? She wonders. Syuzo forces the two of them to shake hands, which just makes things weirder as they avoid each other's gaze. Yuya is seen blushing.

Meanwhile, at Duel Academy, Leo is seen sitting on his throne. He asks Sora if he wants to return to the Standard Dimension, to which Sora responds "I do. There are still XYZ users there." Leo says, 'I will let you go, as long as Obelisk Force accompanies you. However, you must remember that finding the XYZ duelists is not our primary objective. Our primary objective is finding HER.' A hologram of Serena appears, which Sora mistakes for Yuzu Hiiragi. "No, that is Serena Kyoya. She has defected from Duel Academy and stolen confidential information. Bring Serena back by any means necessary." Leo tells Sora.

The next day, Nico Smiley announces the last remaining duelists and says, "instead of concluding the tournament in a traditional way, the higher ups have decided to change it to a battle royal style. The final 16 duelists will face each other in four different

solid vision generated fields throughout Paradise City!” This shocks the crowd. Wait, why isn’t Shay’s name listed? Yuzu wonders.
The scene cuts to Reiji talking to his mother, saying, “some last minute changes on the tournament had to be made, as I sense that more duelists from the Fusion Dimension will be arriving shortly. Releasing these duelists into the city will allow them to intercept the invaders, and give them their first taste at what’s to come if they make it onto the Lancers.” Henrietta agrees to this. “The Senior class of Lancer candidates will also join the fight.” Reiji points out a hologram of a group of unnamed characters popping up. The audience will notice that the group is led by Sakuragi, the guy that Serena had tried to duel.
Reiji then turns around, and the camera pans over to Shay and Yuto standing in the corner of the dark room. “Yuto and Shay, you two will have the job of assessing the strengths of the remaining duelists. Figure out which ones are worthy to join the Lancers.” Reiji tells them. Yuto nods in agreement, but Shay protests, saying, ‘does that mean we’re not going to be fighting the Fusion Warriors?’ Reiji closes his eyes. “You will probably have to at some point, but you will only engage with the enemy as a last resort… Or if the Senior candidates all get wiped out.” This last part shocks Yuto. “You’re

really willing to sacrifice your own students for this experimentation?" He asks. Reiji simply responds, "sacrifices must be made to gain the upper hand."
Yuto doesn't respond to this, but we as the audience understand that he doesn't like the idea of involving innocents in a fight to the death, and by extension, the interdimensional war. Furthermore, we can get why Yuto is so opposed to the idea of sacrificing for an advantage, as he is part of a nearly extinct resistance, where every duelist counts. It is also heavily implied in his origin episode that he is of the belief that "no comrade gets left behind," so you can imagine that Reiji's words go against a lot of Yuto's morals. However, despite this, he doesn't protest further, as he doesn't want to get on Reiji's bad side so that he can remain a part of the Lancers and fulfill his objective. You could argue that this choice is a selfish one, and that he is in the wrong for not speaking up more, but at the same time, he is fighting for his people and putting their needs above his own. I'll leave the debate of character moralities in your hands, but just know that Yuto's moral dilemmas are going to be a recurring theme in my rewrite of Arc-V.
Back with Nico Smiley, he explains the rules of the battle royal. "The matches will start at noon, and action cards will be spread out through the city. The

four zones in the city are in areas that are off-limits to incoming traffic, so rest assured, you don’t have to worry about city dangers in your dueling experience. There will also be Pendulum cards scattered everywhere for you to find. You must have at least one to duel. Before dueling, the two duelists will decide how many Pendulum cards they’re willing to wager. When the duel ends, the winner gets however much was wagered, and same for the loser. Duelists who lose all their Pendulum cards are eliminated, and this keeps going until there is one winner!”

The episode ends with Nico announcing that it is time for the battle royal to start, and the gates open. He yells “Duel” and everyone rushes out. The action fields have already been set up, and people split up to find action cards. There are cameras everywhere in all four zones, so the crowd in the stadium can watch what’s going on.

35. Battle Royale

The episode begins with the action field being set up, where the four zones transform into: a lava zone, a blizzard zone, a rainforest zone, and an ancient ruins zone.

Yuya finds his two Pendulum cards in the lava zone, and is immediately challenged by some unnamed Bandit Warrior Academy students, who want revenge after Iggy's loss. Of course, they must wager their Pendulum cards before dueling.

In the blizzard zone, Gong is chasing after a duelist who looks like Elsa from Frozen. She flirtily giggled at him before taking off. It must be understood, however, that Gong is not chasing after her because he is enticed by her; rather, he just wants a duel.

Also in the blizzard zone, Yuzu encounters a boy who looks like Aladdin. His name is Hillel, and he is from LDS' Fusion course. He admired Yuzu after her win against Masumi, and wants to test out both their Fusion skills. They wager their Pendulum cards and go at it.

Keep in mind, there are cameras everywhere, so the audience is able to watch every duel being taken place.

Gong finally catches up to the girl, whose name is Olga. She flirts with him a little, which makes him uncomfortable. They begin their duel.
The rest of the episode is spent transitioning between Yuya, Yuzu, and Gong's duels before all three of them win.
The episode ends with Shay standing in the ancient ruins zone, trying to look for duelists to observe. It is implied that he and Yuto split up to cover more ground and find more duelists. However, some unnamed duelists spot Shay and challenge him to a duel. Despite his objective being to assess duelists, Shay agrees to the duel.
This shows to the audience that Shay is somewhat of a wildcard, as he doesn't always do as told, even when it benefits everyone. Unlike Yuto, who is traumatized by the brutalities of war and tries to be merciful to innocents, Shay thrives in the heat of battle, and seems to even enjoy it to some extent; especially if he is crushing his opponents. (Whether they're innocent or not) This scene further implies how Yuto and Shay are total opposites of each other, both personality-wise and in terms of their values. I could go on and make a very long list of how many differences Yuto and Shay have, (some of which go really deep and psychological, like how they cope with trauma differently) but I will spare you and

continue on to the next episode. I’m sure when you read this, you can do that on your own time.

36. Deja Vu

The episode begins with Yuya getting the Pendulum cards wagered, as he won the duel. Suddenly, a ginger haired duelist appears before him. “Who are you?” Yuya asks. ‘I am the great Dennis McField!’ Dennis says dramatically. He tells Yuya that he is an exchange student from LDS. Right before a duel between the two can start, the Bandit Warrior Students demand a duel between them and Dennis. He accepts, and Yuya gets to “sit back and enjoy the show!” This lets Yuya realize that “this guy is a dueltainer, like me!”
Dennis XYZ summons and rides his monster, which reminds Yuya of his father riding his monsters.
Meanwhile, in the ancient ruins zone, Shay is dueling three opponents at once. They are from the school of that one unnamed character that Shay beat immediately. (It isn’t important) It doesn’t last long, as Shay uses Rise Falcon to obliterate all his opponents, leaving them lying on the ground. He walks off, murmuring, “none of you have the iron will or steeled strength necessary to be a Lancer.” The audience will realize that these words are a recurring theme with Shay, and it prompts you to

realize, “these are some of Shay’s values during war, and is why he evaluates people on them.” To that I say… You are partly correct. All will be revealed later on…

In the blizzard zone, Yuzu offers Gong one of the Pendulum cards she won from her duel with Hillel. Gong refuses, as he already won two Pendulum cards. They part ways, and encourage each other to keep going.

Dennis finally beats the Bandit Warrior students, and takes all of their Pendulum cards. Yuya congratulates him on his victory. “I’ve always wanted to meet Yusho Sakaki Jr!” Dennis tells him. ‘You know my father?’ Yuya asked. “Of course I do! He’s the best dueltainer to have ever lived! I want to be just like him one day.” Dennis said, admiration showing in his eyes. Feeling overwhelmed with emotion, Yuya resolves to team up with Dennis, as he reminded Yuya a lot of his dad. The two shake hands and encourage each other to do their best. I swear that I’ll win this tournament and be on my way to being a true dueltainer, just like my father!

The episode ends with Yuto watching Yuya and Dennis from behind a tree. He narrows his eyes at the ginger haired duelist. Dennis McField… Do I know him? He seems so… Familiar… Somehow.

37. Exposure

The episode begins with Olga and Hillel's Pendulum cards being stolen by a guy named Trout. His strategy seems to be stealing and sabotaging others to advance through the battle royale.
Meanwhile, Yuzu is seen in the lava zone. She runs into Dennis, who introduces himself as "Yuya's dueltaining pal!" Yuzu is surprised to hear this. 'Everybody I duel becomes a friend!' Dennis declares, preparing his wager. "You dueled Yuya?" Yuzu asked. "No, but I protected him from other duelists. Through our shared admiration of Yusho Sakaki, our lost souls bonded! We're like kindred spirits!" Dennis said gleefully. He's certainly a character… But something about his cheerful demeanor feels so much more genuine compared to Yuya…
"Yuzu Hiiragi, I challenge you to a duel!" Dennis declares dramatically. 'How do you know my name?' Yuzu asks. "I watched your magnificent duel against Masumi, and it was truly a showstopper!" Dennis praised. Feeling flattered by the encouragement, Yuzu thinks, I guess I never really thought about it, but… My duel with Masumi

must’ve really been a hit! Dennis takes out a rose from his orange suit and gives it to Yuzu, and asks, “will you do the honor of engaging in a duel?” Yuzu tries to convince herself that Dennis totally wasn’t coming onto her and that he was just being extra. She agrees to the duel.

Yuzu’s father is NOT happy about Dennis offering his daughter a rose, and seems to think that he’s flirting with her. The other Yusho gang, however, seems to be shipping the two. This sets up ANOTHER potential love interest for Yuzu, but it is also important to mention that she doesn’t seem to have any interest in Dennis whatsoever.

The duel takes up most of the episode, and Yuzu ends up winning. It should be noted, however, that Dennis could’ve won, but decided to hold back. As to why he did that, the audience doesn’t know… Throughout the duel, Dennis wowed the audience with the show he put on, and even impressed Yuzu as well. They leave the duel as friends. He’s like Yuya, but more put together… By this point, Yuzu still has negative feelings towards Yuya. She seems to still not like how he has treated her in the past, and seems to also not like how weird he’s been around her lately. This is partly why Yuzu finds Dennis far more trustworthy.

However, once the duel is over, Serena suddenly

appears. Yuzu is shocked to see how similar Serena looks to herself. Is this… Ruri? Serena challenges Dennis to a duel.

Meanwhile, Yuya is seen in the ancient ruins zone. Shay observes him from behind a pillar. Suddenly, the Obelisk Force appears, with Sora leading them. Sora sees Shay from his hiding spot, and immediately challenges him to a duel. Yuya tries to stop him, but Sora sends the Obelisk Force to intercept Yuya. Why is Sora with these people? Who are they?

Before the Obelisk Force can challenge Yuya, some more unnamed tournament people arrive. They challenge the Obelisk Force to a duel, perhaps to protect Yuya.

Meanwhile, Sora and Shay prepare for their rematch. Shay's already established pride causes him to accept Sora's challenge instead of sticking to his objective.

Back with Yuya, the duel between the unnamed characters and Obelisk Force ends almost immediately. All three characters lose, which shocks Yuya. What happens next is even worse. He notices that the Obelisk Force walks up to the fallen duelists, and activates something in their duel disks. A bright light emits from it, and the duelists evaporate. Yuya watches in horror as three cards lie

on the ground where the duelists used to be. “Standard Dimension duelists are such garbage!” One Obelisk Force member comments.

Seeing the process of being carded, Yuya freezes in fear. While he had heard about the horrors of war from Yuto, now that he was seeing it with his own eyes… It just felt more… Real. Fear crept through Yuya’s body, as he thought about what he had just witnessed. They’re… cards! Does that mean they’re dead, or are they alive but just trapped? Yuya’s brain can’t think too much, as he is in so much shock that he can barely process it. All he can do is let out a blood-curdling scream.

38. Enigma

The episode begins with Reiji calling someone and saying, “shut off the cameras for the lava and ancient ruins zones.” The scene transitions to that happening, with the audience shocked and booing. Nico Smiley tells them, ‘oh, we seem to be facing some technical difficulties. The screens will be on shortly!’ The crowd is understandably mad, as someone yells, “I paid a lot for these seats!” Two out of the four zones’ cameras aren’t working, and the blizzard zone doesn’t have anyone in it. The jungle zone is the only one that has duelists in it that the audience can see.

In the jungle zone, Gong challenges Trout to a duel, but he refuses. “You’re just sitting here doing nothing!” Gong remarks. Trout says, “What I’m doing is none of your business. Go find someone else.” This makes Gong mad, as he can’t duel Olga or Hillel. (because they don’t have any Pendulum cards left)

Meanwhile, in the lava zone, Yuzu says, “Ruri?” Dennis looks at Yuzu in surprise, but Serena ignores this. Instead, she says, ‘duel me! I know that you’re the last of the XYZ resistance!’ This shocks Yuzu.

Nevermind, definitely not Ruri! “I can assure you, I’m not! I’m from LDS!” Dennis protests. “Don’t play dumb! If you won’t start talking, I’ll make you!” Serena declares, and activates her duel disk. Yuzu sees that Serena’s duel disk is nothing like Yuto or Shay’s duel disk. It doesn’t even look like it’s from here! Dennis accepts this challenge, saying, “you are sorely mistaken! However, dueltaining is all about adaptation and opening the minds of others, so count me in!”

Serena starts off by getting out Cat Dancer, and ends her turn.

Back with Yuya, he is still staring at the Obelisk Force in shock. They begin to approach him, since he literally just screamed. However, runs from them in fear. The Obelisk Force decides not to chase him. After all, why go after another Standard Dimension duelist, who will probably just be a waste of time?

Meanwhile, Shay and Sora are dueling. Shay summons Force Strix and has its attack reach 1100. Sora scoffs and says, “why do you duel with such weak monsters?” Shay glares at him. “Maybe you should stop making judgements about things that are too good to be true and watch!” He yells at Sora.

The reason I had Shay say this is to make fun of all the Yugioh shows, because I hate it when characters are always like, “oh your monster’s attack is weaker

than mine, what was the point!” And it’s like, obviously there’s a catch! Don’t say something like that! Just let the character explain what’s going to happen!

Back with Dennis, he purposefully doesn’t XYZ summon. He knows that if he does, Serena will be even more suspicious of him. He ends his turn quickly, much to Serena’s anger. She asks why he didn’t XYZ summon, and he says, “because I’m not from the XYZ Dimension!”

Serena ruthlessly decimates Dennis’ field with Cat Dancer’s effect, (by tributing a monster, it can attack every monster twice) which makes Yuzu realize that Serena is from Duel Academy. She also comes to this conclusion because she notices that the atmosphere feels real, and thinks, Dennis looks like he’s taking real damage!

Serena reacts in disgust at Dennis’ attempt to make the duel “entertaining,” and yells, “are you mocking me? This isn’t how a duel should be used!”

Back with Shay and Sora, Sora takes his turn. The duel continues on.

Once it’s Dennis’ turn, he draws Polymerization. This means that Dennis can XYZ and Fusion summon. However, Dennis decides against using Polymerization, which is meant to tip off something to the viewer. He ends his turn, which angers Serena.

She asks him if he is underestimating her, which he denies.
Serena uses more Lunalights, and the reason I'm emphasizing this is because I use Lunalights in Duel Links and I'm biased.
Serena wins, and it is heavily implied that Dennis lost because he held back. This should also tip something off to the audience. "Worthless." Serena mutters, and walks up to Dennis.
Suddenly, Obelisk Force appears.
Reiji orders the Senior candidates be sent to Serena's location.
Just like that, they appear, led by none other than Sakuragi. Some unnamed members rescue Serena and Yuzu and take them away from the scene.
The episode ends with Yuya still running, and he ends up running past Yuto. "Why are you running?" Yuto asks calmly. 'Yuto? Why are you here? You're not in the tournament!' Yuya remarks. Secretly, he is relieved. Yuto's calming presence calms Yuya down a little. "Why I'm here isn't important. If you could answer my question, that would be great." Yuto presses. He observes how jumpy and petrified Yuya looks. Yuya looks behind him, and starts shaking. "I… Saw guards turn someone into a card!" Yuto's eyes widened in shock. He grabs Yuya's shoulders tightly. "They're here." Yuto says, his voice

suddenly angrier than normal. Yuto’s calming presence isn’t quite as calming anymore… Yuya thinks. “Who is?” Yuya asks. Yuto’s eyes narrow. “Obelisk Force.”

39. Honor is...?

The episode begins in the blizzard zone. A bright flash of light appears, and Yugo emerges. He is seen holding his Clear Wing Synchro Dragon. Where am I? Did I time travel or something? He looks around. Whenever this card glows, I'm taken somewhere new… But this is the first time I've gone to a different point in time. I'm not surprised that the topsiders' injustices would lead to this dystopian wasteland! Yugo then hears a voice calling toward him. Two unnamed characters emerge, yelling, "Yuya? Is that you?" This triggers Yugo, and he yells, "my name is Yugo!"

Back with Reiji, he is informed that a strong Synchro summoning was picked up. I wonder, is it Yugo? If so, I wonder if he is an enemy of Duel Academy as well…

Meanwhile, Gong is seen running through the jungle zone looking for a new opponent. He encounters Yuya and Yuto. "Gong!" Yuya is happy to see Gong okay. 'Why is Yuto here?' Gong asks. "I don't know, but I'm glad you're alright! Have you seen Yuzu?" Yuya asked. "Yeah, I actually have. She was in the blizzard zone last time I saw her." He said.

Back with Yuzu, the two unnamed characters have dragged the two of them away from Obelisk Force. Serena protests to them that she didn't need their help. One of the unnamed characters goes back to the lava zone, while one stays. Yuzu questions the remaining unnamed character on who the guards were, and he tells her "they are the Obelisk Force; the main military force of Duel Academy." This shocks Yuzu.

'Why would they be after us?' Yuzu asks Serena. "They're obeying the orders of the Professor. At Duel Academy, the orders of the Professor are absolute and nobody can disobey him… But I did, so that I could prove my own power. If I defeat the XYZ duelists in this dimension, then the Professor will regret not sending me out to the front lines!" Serena declares. Serena is from Duel Academy, but she's actively disobeying orders to prove herself? Does she know the danger she's in? "Is that why you dueled Dennis?" Yuzu asked. "Yes, but clearly he wasn't from the XYZ dimension." Serena admitted.

Not too far away, Dennis is eavesdropping on their conversation. "Told ya so!" He whispers playfully.

'Wait, when you say the 'front lines,' do you mean the XYZ Dimension invasion?' Yuzu asks, putting the pieces together. Somewhat surprised by Yuzu's words, Serena confirms it. "All of my comrades

went to the XYZ Dimension and were able to prove their skills honorably, but I was forced to stay behind…" Serena laments. This triggers something in Yuzu. She had so many questions going through her mind, but all she could focus on was: does Serena have ANY idea of the horrors her comrades committed there? Yuzu instantly thought of Yuto telling her about how Duel Academy took everything from him, and how sad he looked. She remembered Shay's duel with Sora, in how Shay made several heartbreaking monologues about how merciless the invasion was, and how he and his comrades had no choice but to fight back.

Yuzu forcefully asks, "do you even know what Duel Academy did in the XYZ Dimension?" Taken aback by Yuzu's question, Serena couldn't find the words to respond. Serena knew deep down that she had no idea what her comrades did; all she wanted to think of was how mad she was at being left behind. 'That's what I thought.' Yuzu said grimly. She did her best to explain what happened. "Heartland City was once a peaceful place… Before Duel Academy invaded. The invaders ruthlessly slaughtered everyone there… And as they did, they would laugh at their opponents' pain. They treated it as if it were some sort of sick hunting game."

The scene changes to Gong, Yuya, and Yuto heading

toward the blizzard zone. Yuto thinks, Yuzu… I hope she's said her goodbyes…

After Yuzu finished her tale, Serena scoffs, saying, "that's ridiculous. The students of Duel Academy wouldn't laugh at someone in pain." Yuzu narrowed her eyes. 'What if they lied to you?' She asked. "They wouldn't lie to us! Duel Academy is always honest with us, even with their ultimate goals." Serena said. "Okay, if they're so honest, what goal do they have?" Yuzu retorted. "Duel Academy has a noble objective; make the four worlds into one. The invasion of the XYZ Dimension was the start, and soon they will invade all worlds. All of the warriors of Duel Academy were trained for this goal their whole lives. We have honor, and honorable warriors wouldn't do what you speak of." Serena explained. "Where is the honor in bringing people grief and death?" Yuzu angrily demanded. "What do they have to grieve over? If the XYZ duelists fought with all their might and still lost, then they should be able to let Duel Academy continue their objectives." Serena tried to argue.

Yuzu grabbed Serena by the shoulders. "Are you telling them to accept that their homeland was destroyed and their loved ones were killed?" Confused, Serena looked Yuzu in the eye. 'What do you mean? I'm sure if that happened, the XYZ

duelists must've done something to deserve it! Weren't they all duelists?' Yuzu shook her head. "No. Not everyone from the XYZ Dimension was a duelist. Duel Academy killed them all; duelist or not, child or not… They all died! Why is that so hard to understand?" Yuzu yelled out. Serena was too stunned to respond. "If you really don't believe me, you can go talk to Shay Obsidian. He's a true XYZ user who's in the Standard Dimension and participated in the tournament… He'll tell you everything."

Serena nodded slowly. "Fine. I'll meet Shay and see if what you said was true." Yuzu nods as well. 'I think it would be good if we switched clothes.' Serena looked at her in shock. "Well, it would be a hassle if the Obelisk Force found you before you got to talk to Shay." Yuzu commented. "Oh… So you'd be my doppelganger to draw away the Obelisk Force?" Serena asked, to which Yuzu confirmed.

Serena prepares to take off her clothes, but Yuzu protests immediately. "Why are you doing that?" Serena asks. Yuzu points toward the unnamed duelist next to them. Serena still doesn't get the hint that changing in public isn't good, so Yuzu leads her behind a rock.

After switching clothes, Yuzu and Serena look at themselves. "Your outfit is pretty cute!" Yuzu

beams, looking over at Serena. She doesn’t seem to understand how to react, so Serena just stares back blankly. Yuzu ignores this awkward reaction, and says, “Shay wasn’t in the jungle or lava zone, so he must be in the ancient ruins zone.” The two girls nod to each other and part ways; Yuzu to go further into the blizzard zone, and Serena to go to the ancient ruins zone.

The episode ends with Dennis emerging from his hiding spot. Suddenly, a shadow appears next to him. A duelist with pink hair emerges. “Hello dear.” The pink haired duelist greets Dennis, who in response says, “You’ve finally arrived… Yuri.”

40. A New Threat

The episode begins with the audience furious that none of the cameras are working. No one can see what is happening in any of the zones. The audience is also furious that they are all forced to stay the night at the stadium, for no apparent reason. Of course, we know that they are forcing them to stay for their own safety, but they're not going to tell them that there are invaders.

Meanwhile, Yuri asks Dennis, "did you find HER yet?" Dennis nodded, and pointed to Yuzu. Much to both of their surprise, she has already been surrounded by Obelisk Force. Dennis fills Yuri in on the situation; Yuzu and Serena swapped clothes and split up, as they are look-alikes. 'It's like how you and Yuya Sakaki look alike.' Dennis remarked. "Who is Yuya Sakaki?" Yuri asked. "The son of Yusho Sakaki, a famous dueltainer. He resides in this Dimension."

This scene is meant to show to the audience immediately that Dennis isn't who he seems, but the characters don't know that yet. He's essentially a double agent like Sora, but he reveals himself to the audience way faster. For us as the audience, since

we already know he’s a double agent, we sit here and wonder how long it will take for the rest of the characters to figure it out.
Olga and Hillel accidentally crash into Dennis and Yuri. This annoys both of them, and Dennis calls them “garbage that needs to be disposed of.”
The scene cuts back to Yuzu. In order for Serena to learn what happened in the XYZ Dimension, she has to meet Shay… So I have to keep these guys off her trail! She activates her duel disk, and shouts, “if it comes to it, I’ll fight!”
Suddenly, Yuri jumps down toward Yuzu and the Obelisk Force, calling his own military a “nuisance.” His resemblance to Yuya makes Yuzu hesitate for a second. ‘Yuya? What are you doing here?’ She asks. “What are you saying? I’m not Yuya. I’m Yuri.” Yuri coldly responds, before saying, “if you guys don’t get out of my way, you’ll end up like these two.” He shows the Obelisk Force the recently carded Hillel and Olga. Yuzu is shocked to see the two carded; she had heard about such terrible things before, but she had never seen it in person. They look so scared… She thinks, looking at their expressions on the card. This seems to unsettle the Obelisk Force as well, as they back off. It’s definitely not Yuya… But then… Why are there so many people who look like either Yuya or I?

“Why would you do something like this?” Yuzu asks angrily. ‘They were nuisances.’ Yuri responds coldly. Yuzu yells at him some more, but he interrupts her, saying “if you don’t shut up I’ll turn you into a card as well.” The threat silences Yuzu, as a wave of fear spreads over her. “Actually, just kidding. I’m not allowed to seal you into a card, or hurt you at all… If I did, the Professor would kill me!” Yuri admitted. What would Yuri or the Professor want with me? And with Serena, too? It sounds so sketchy! She thinks.

“Are you from Duel Academy?” Yuzu asks. Yuri nods, and says, ‘it really is astonishing. You look nearly identical to Ruri and Rin.’ This makes Yuzu gasp in shock. He knows about Ruri? “Did you kidnap Ruri and Rin?” Yuzu asked. With a creepy smile, Yuri responds, “of course I did.” This sends a shiver up Yuzu’s spine. His smile was so unsettling. This was the guy who took Yuto’s girlfriend from him! What does this creep want with four teenage girls? Actually, nevermind, I don’t want to know… “Why would you do something like that?” Yuzu asked. “It’s the Professor’s orders. He ordered me to kidnap you, Ruri, Rin, and Serena.” Yuri responded. “What does he want with us?” Yuzu asked. Yuri shrugged. “How should I know? I just follow his orders.”

Yuri walks up to Yuzu and extends a hand out. “Come with me to see the Professor. If you come along willingly, it’s much easier for us both… Although, I do prefer you put up a fight… It makes my job much more entertaining.” Hearing the word “entertaining” come from this creep’s mouth, not to mention someone who looked like Yuya, disgusted Yuzu. She slapped his hand away and back flipped four times and landed on her feet. This is impressive on its own, but it’s even more impressive when you consider that she did this on ice.

Yuri seemed unfazed by this reaction, saying, “you really are like Ruri and Rin… Fighting till’ the end and making my life more entertaining… Alright, how about we duel, then. If you win, I will let you go… But if I win, you have to go with me to Duel Academy.” Yuzu is hesitant to duel, but Yuri activates his duel disk and forces her into it. ‘If you won’t start, then I will! Come on, what’s the hesitance for? You were soooo ready to duel Obelisk Force!’ Yuri taunts. Yuzu narrows her eyes at him. “Fine! I’ll defeat you for Ruri and Rin’s sake, creep!” She vows.

Back with Dennis, he tells the Obelisk Force to “leave Yuzu to Yuri.” He also flips his collar on his suit up, revealing a Duel Academy badge. “You have to listen to me.” Dennis commands.

The scene transitions to Yugo in the lava zone, where he is wondering how he went from ice to fire. He hears screaming nearby, and he goes to check it out. Yugo sees the Obelisk Force defeating the Senior class candidates, and eventually carding them all. Shocked by this, Yugo races down with his motorcycle, and intercepts the Obelisk Force on the bridge. He begins to duel them out of anger after just witnessing them card innocents. “Who are you?” One of the members asks. ‘I’m Yugo!’ Yugo yells. “Fusion?” One of them asks in surprise. This triggers Yugo. “No, stupid! I’m Yugo! Yuuu-gooo! It’s not that hard! What part of my name sounds like ‘Fusion’ in the slightest?” The Obelisk Force appear to be stunned, as they think that Yugo is their ally. Despite this, Yugo doesn’t seem to notice and continues the duel in anger.

Meanwhile, Reiji and Claude are watching Yugo’s duel with great interest. They watch on the screen Clear Wing decimate all of the members and beat them. “It seems as though the Synchro Dimension isn’t our enemy after all.” Reiji comments. ‘Sir, how can this duelist beat a whole army that our Senior candidates couldn’t defeat? I can’t believe they’re all carded!’ Claude mentions. “If the Senior candidates couldn’t take on Obelisk Force, then no one from LDS will be able to… That’s why I’m making a

team of the new generation of Lancers.” Reiji explains.
Suddenly, Sylvio bursts through the doorway of the VIP booth. “How did you get here?” Claude demands. ‘My father’s influence was more than enough for that! But more importantly, what the heck is going on? Why aren’t the cameras working? I want to see how far Yuya’s gotten!’ Sylvio yelled. “Fine, you can watch… But I also have another idea. Would you like to take part in a revival match?” Reiji asked. Sylvio grinned in response.
Meanwhile, Yuzu is seen hiding from Yuri in fear. The looming shadow of Starving Venom Fusion Dragon lurches near her hiding spot. “I’m surprised you’ve managed to survive this long… But our little game of hide and seek is over.” Yuri says, and his dragon slashes through the ice. This reveals Yuzu’s hiding spot. “There you are!” Yuri says, a creepy grin spreading across his face. This triggers Yuzu, and pelts Yuri in the face with a piece of ice in anger and starts running.
Suddenly, Yuzu runs into Yugo. “Rin?” Yugo asks. ‘Rin Rin! You’re safe!’ He exclaims, hugging her tightly. “What? I’m not Rin!” Yuzu protests, taking his hands off of her. She looks the mysterious boy in the eyes, and gasps. “Yuya?” She asks. “My name is Yugo! Not Yuya!” Yugo yells out.

Yugo realizes that Yuri is nearby, which triggers him. “You creep! I’ve been waiting for my rematch!” Yugo yells at him. He knows that Yuri took his girlfriend? Yuzu wonders. Yugo prepares to duel Yuri alongside Yuzu.

Meanwhile, Serena runs up the stairs to the ancient ruins zone and sees Shay dueling Sora. When Sora’s monsters attack Shay’s monsters, they are violently beheaded. The shockwave blasts Shay off the platform, and he is seen falling from the stairs past Serena. Shay falls down each stair until roughly hitting the ground, where he loses to Sora. He looks beat up and appears to be bleeding. Serena looks on in horror. How am I going to get my answers now? She wonders.

41. Intrusion

The episode begins where the previous episode ended. Serena runs down the stairs toward Shay, and Sora follows. “It looks like I won!” He sneers. Serena reaches the bottom and attempts to help him up. In agony, Shay clutches his ribs, implying that he has bad internal injuries. ‘Yuzu, get out of my way. Shay is meant to be hunted.’ Sora sighs in annoyance. Serena turns around and activates her duel disk, which makes him realize that she isn’t Yuzu. She activates Lunar Eclipse, which shrouds the area in darkness, and manages to escape with Shay. “Wait!” Sora yells out, as he tries to catch them.

Later on in the lava zone, we see Serena helping Shay walk as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, he falls to his knees out of pain. “Are you okay?” Serena asks. ‘No.’ Shay responds through gritted teeth. “Can you just let me kill him already? If you try to protect him, you’ll get hurt.” Sora says, catching up to the pair.

Suddenly, the two unnamed Senior class candidates come to Shay and Serena’s rescue. One stays behind to fight Sora, and the other escorts the pair to safety.

Back with Reiji, he comments “Serena is an important asset for negotiating with Duel Academy… So she must be protected at all costs.” He asks Claude how many enemies remain, and he says, “four… Including Sora Perse.”
Meanwhile, Dennis and the remaining Obelisk Force members are in the lava zone. He points out where Serena is, and lets the Obelisk Force take care of it.
The Obelisk Force goes up to Serena, Shay, and the unnamed Senior candidate, and demands that she go back to Duel Academy. “You’re going to have to take me by force!” Serena yells, but is surprised to see Shay and the unnamed character step in front of her protectively. I can’t even see Shay’s face… But somehow, I can sense this… Intensity about him… Serena thinks. What reason does he have to protect me? The six duelists begin their duel.
Serena steps forward to take her turn instead of Shay. She notices that when she Fusion Summons Cat Dancer, he seemed to look at her in shock. Why is he so surprised? All I did was Fusion Summon?
Back with Sora, we see him summon Frightfur Leo. Suddenly, Yuya, Gong, and Yuto arrive in the lava zone. Yuya is horrified to see Sora dueling an unnamed character with such brutality. “Sora! What are you doing? Why are you working for Duel Academy? I thought we were friends!” Yuya yells

out. Sora ignores him. ‘Look at me!’ Yuya cries out, and Gong and Yuto notice the sorrow in his voice. Yuto grabs Yuya’s shoulder and shakes his head. “Your friend is a spy sent by Duel Academy. You have to accept that.” He said to Yuya.
“Wait! Is that Yuzu?” Gong asks, pointing toward Serena. This gets both Yuya and Yuto’s attention. Yuya notices Yuto clench his fist. ‘Yuzu and Shay are facing Obelisk Force.’ He says. “We have to help her!” Yuya insists, and tries to run. Yuto catches him by the wrist. “Leave Yuzu to Gong and I. You can deal with Sora and sever your ties with him for good.” Yuto reasons. If Yuya can prove that he’s strong enough to sever his bond with someone for the good of others… Then he can join the Lancers. Yuto thinks. “But Yuzu…” Yuya tries to protest. “Is a strong and capable duelist. The reason she tried to learn Fusion Summoning was for the sake of protecting her friends… And that’s what she’s doing right now. Yuzu doesn’t need you; you need her.” Yuto interrupts Yuya, giving him a stern look. This shocks Yuya, but he can’t find the words to respond. This allows Yuto and Gong to run off to join Serena. Frozen in place, Yuya extends a hand toward where Yuto and Gong used to stand, but he can’t say anything. All he can do is think, Please… Don’t leave me!

Meanwhile, Trout and an unnamed tournament duelist interrupt the duel and join in. Unfortunately, Obelisk Force cards them immediately, chastising them for interrupting the duel. This act shocks Serena, as she had always thought that you only carded the enemy if they lost fair and square.

Just then Yuto and Gong arrive. “Yuto!” Shay yells out. Serena turns to look at Yuto in surprise. Is this the other XYZ duelist? She thinks. She and Yuto lock eyes for a second. Why is he looking at me like that? It’s as if he’s surprised to see me? Yuto and Gong join the duel, much to her shock. Serena notices how intense Yuto and Shay’s presence seems. She stares at Gong for a second and thinks, he’s so tall! Yet… He isn’t very intimidating!

Back with Yuya, he witnesses Sora card the unnamed Senior duelist. He demands that Sora duel him. He agrees to this, and leads Yuya to a cave where they won’t be interrupted. “I’ve always wanted to settle the score with you anyway.” Sora admits.

Yuto and Gong take their turns. Yuto brings out his Phantom Knights cards, and Gong shows off his Superheavy Samurai cards. Again, I’m emphasizing this because I felt like these two didn’t get enough duel time in the actual show.

The episode ends with the sudden intrusion of yet

another duelist… “I’m back, baby!” Sylvio yells out, as he strikes a pose. Yuto stares at him in surprise. Why is he here? Gong asked Sylvio what he was doing, to which Sylvio responded, “I have come to save the day!”

42. Rise, Lancer Defense Squad!

The episode begins with the finals match for the Youth Division in the tournament. The duel between Tate and Riley is a short one, as Riley uses all the summoning methods against the poor lad. Once Riley wins, Nico announces, “Riley is the winner in another landslide victory! His mastery of all the summoning methods is incredibly impressive!” Tate compliments Riley by saying, ‘the way you’ve mastered all of the summoning methods is just like Declan!’ Riley smiles at this, which is the first time the audience has seen them smile. “Thanks.” Riley shyly responds.

Meanwhile, Sylvio takes his turn. His deck appears to have changed again, this time to the Abyss Actor archetype. He seems to be doing his best to make the duel “entertaining” much like Yuya is. Something about him is different. He’s still ignorant and fighting for the wrong reasons… But he seems to be slightly less full of himself. Yuto thinks. If a formerly pampered, entitled, sheltered Standard Dimension LDS student is able to be humbled and adjust to war… Then maybe he does belong in the

Lancers.
Back with Yuya and Sora, they begin their duel. “I went easy on you last time, but I won’t now!” Sora declares. ‘Last time we dueled… Your smile was genuine. You followed me around everywhere, like a puppy. What happened to you?’ Yuya cried out to him. Sora narrowed his eyes. “I was sent here with an objective to fulfill, not to make friends. I never cared about you.” He said to Yuya. “What about all the times you came over to my house? When you’d compliment my mom’s cooking, or follow me everywhere? If you truly didn’t care about me, why would you put in the effort to do all that? Why would you become so invested in my life just to pull away?” Yuya yelled at him. “I had to get people to trust me so I could get what I wanted.” Sora coldly responded. “That’s awful!” Yuya yelled. “Being left behind already hurts! But when it’s someone you care about who purposely tries to make the effort to be close to you, just to leave in the end without warning… It’s absolutely despicable!”
This scene is meant to show Yuya essentially being a hypocrite. While he is mad and processing his feelings about Sora’s betrayal, he is basically blaming Sora for things that could also apply to Yusho. In a way, this scene could be interpreted as Yuya subconsciously unveiling his feelings toward

his father, and how the abandonment hurt him… Perhaps Yuya is yelling at both Sora and his father in this scene, without him realizing it.

After all the intrusions, Shay can finally take his turn. He Pendulum Summons for the first time, and brings out Revolution Falcon.

Back to Yuya and Sora, Yuya asks Sora if he knew what happened in the XYZ Dimension. Obviously, Sora knows what happened, and it's clear that Yuya is just wasting time. "Why would you do something like that? Do you know how many people were killed?" Yuya asked. 'You can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.' Sora responded as he bit into a lollipop. "It wasn't Duel Academy's right to invade another Dimension!" Yuya yells out. Sora tells him to shut up and continue dueling.

As they duel, Yuya is forced to come to terms with Sora being a part of Duel Academy. "We're enemies now, and I can't hold back! There are people counting on me!" Yuya finally resolves. Sora rolled his eyes. "Took you long enough." He says.

Suddenly, the Solid Vision System disintegrates around them, and they are left standing in a taped off area in the city. Nico Smiley declares over the intercom that the battle royale has ended. Yuya and Sora look at each other in confusion. There hasn't been a winner yet! They both head out of the cave,

and see Shay, Serena, Yuto, Gong, Sylvio, and the unnamed Senior duelist. The Obelisk Force and Sora activate the “return” function on their duel disks, presumably to teleport themselves back to Duel Academy.

Yuya runs up to Serena and hugs her, but she violently pushes him off. “I’m not Yuzu!” Serena tells him. She fills Yuya in on how she and Yuzu swapped clothes and how she was probably being chased by Obelisk Force.

Just then, Yugo rides up to the whole group, with Yuzu on his motorcycle with him. “It’s you!” Yuya angrily says. Yugo looked at him in confusion. ‘Do I know you?’ He asked. “You literally tried to kill me!” Yuya told him. “Ohhhh that.” Yugo realized. “You did what?” Yuzu asked angrily, getting off of the motorcycle. “Uh, it was a misunderstanding! I was trying to get to the creep who took Rin!” Yugo quickly said. He spotted Yuto in the group of duelists. “Yeah… So… Sorry for assuming you were the creep.” Yugo apologized awkwardly. “What changed your mind? The fact that I’ve told you multiple times?” Yuto asked in annoyance. “No, the creep… I mean, Yuri… He was here. We barely got away alive. He’s the one who took Rin and Ruri… And tried to take Yuzu.” Yuto’s eyes widened, and Shay limped toward Yugo. “We… Have a lead…”

Shay realized.
“This is all very sweet and all…” Yuya rudely interrupted. ‘But why the heck is Yuzu with you? What did you do with her, and why is some creep trying to take her?’ Yuya asked. “You know, a thank you would’ve been nice. I saved your girlfriend from getting kidnapped.” Yugo scolds him. This made Yuzu mad. “I’m not his girlfriend! And don’t make it sound like I was useless! I saved your butt on multiple occasions, too!” She yelled at him. Ouch… Yuya thought.
Suddenly, Reiji appeared in front of them. “I’ve seen all of your duels. You are all worthy to become Lancers.” This revelation surprised a lot of them. ‘No way in heck is Yugo going to be a Lancer!’ Shay yelled. “I’m what now?” Yugo asked. Reiji silenced them. “Everyone standing here in this parking lot is a Lancer now. The point of the tournament was to find suitable duelists to form a rebellion against Duel Academy.” He revealed. Yuto walked forward toward Reiji. “I’ve assessed Yuya, Yuzu, and Sylvio. They are all in the clear.” He said. Reiji nodded. “Starting now, you will all be Lancers!” The camera fades out to show Yuya, Yuzu, Gong, Sylvio, Yuto, Shay, Yugo, Serena, Dennis, Riley, and Reiji.

43. Two Sides to Every Story

The episode starts right where we left off. While everyone is still somewhat surprised, Gong, Yugo, Serena, and Dennis are taken completely off guard. Everyone else had at least heard of the Lancers, or had been offered by Reiji, but these four never did.
“What makes you think you can trust me?” Serena asked Reiji. ‘I have my ways.’ He said calmly. “Wait, who are you? And why do you look like Yuzu?” Yuya asked her. “I’m Serena.” She said, and then said nothing else.
Yuya turned to Reiji. “I understand that Yuzu and I wanted to be part of this group, but don’t you think this was a bit much? I mean, we all could’ve gotten killed!” He exclaimed. ‘It’s not like I could’ve gone easy on you; after all, we’re meant to be a group of soldiers rebelling against Duel Academy.’ Reiji pointed out. “But what would you have done if one of us had died? If my friends had died…?” Yuya said, feeling overwhelmed. He was still emotional after watching people get carded, and from having to cut ties with Sora. “I would simply replace them.” Reiji responded coldly. This triggered Yuya, and he tried to punch Reiji’s face. Reiji blocked it coolly

with his hand.
“If you’re really this mad at me for things beyond our control, then how about we duel. It would help you blow off some steam, and it could allow me to gain more insight as to why you even deserve to be a Lancer.” Reiji told him. Yuya couldn’t help but be unsettled by the cold eyes that looked back at him. How can Declan say such terrible things without a hint of expression? Those eyes… So cold… “Fine! I’ll duel you. This time, I’m gonna win without interruptions!” Yuya said, preparing his duel disk.
Everyone was surprised that a duel was even happening in the first place. “Okay, guess I have to sit back and watch this?” Yugo wondered.
In this time, Yuto had walked over to Shay, and helped his friend stay upright. “I still don’t see how the son of Yusho Sakaki deserves to be a Lancer.” Shay grumbled. Yuto narrowed his eyes toward Yuya. “He’s loyal till’ the end. Nothing can shake his resolve to protect his comrades…” Yuto wanted to tell Shay the real reason he recruited Yuya, but he knew his friend wouldn’t understand. Yuya shares the same philosophy as Ruri does…
Yuto’s mind flashbacks to before the invasion. “His name is Yusho Sakaki… The man who taught Saya this belief.” Ruri explained. ‘I mean, he’s right. Dueling should only be used for those purposes.’

Yuto expressed his agreement. “I’m passing this onto you, so whenever you start to doubt your dueling in any way, just think about this.” She said to him. Yuto nodded. “I will.”
The scene changed to a flashback of the invasion. “Dueling isn’t meant to be like this! It should make people happy!” Ruri cried out as she hugged a little girl. Yuto stopped in his tracks as he watched her cry. All around him, chaos ensued: buildings were destroyed, people were dying, and darkness was spreading over the broken city. Fusion users were summoning monsters that were murdering innocents all around them. Yuto so badly wished dueling could be how it used to be… It should never have been used to cause so much pain.
Despite what Yusho Sakaki did to us, his beliefs weren’t all wrong. Yeah, there were flaws in his logic, but dueling should always have just been a card game. It should never have been turned into a weapon. I have to remember Ruri’s words, no matter what. Yuto thought.
Serena took this opportunity to go up and talk to Shay. For a second Yuto thought Serena was Ruri, but he realized that her duel disk was a Duel Academy one. “What do you want?” Yuto asked her sharply. Shay blocked Yuto from Serena. ‘She protected me from Sora.’ Shay reasoned. Yuto

looked up at Shay in surprise, and backed off. “By the way, thanks for that… But why would you protect me from one of your own?” Shay questioned her. Yuto noticed Shay’s unusually calm tone toward the girl. Normally, Shay’s always untrusting and aggressive toward Fusion users. Sure, she helped him, but I’m surprised he isn’t trying to duel her right on the spot… Is it because she looks like Ruri? Yuto wondered.

“I left Duel Academy to prove that I was strong enough to stand on my own, so the Professor would recognize my strength… But Yuzu Hiiragi told me that Duel Academy has lied to me and committed several acts of horrors that go directly against what I’ve been taught. Is this true?” Serena asked. Shay nodded, his expression having a mix of anger and sadness. This shocked Serena. She knew from Shay’s expression that he was telling the truth. In her mind, nobody could possibly fake a look of pain and sorrow like that. Yuto closed his eyes too, and Serena could tell from his face that he wasn’t lying, either. Serena looked at the ground, her stomach twisted in knots. “No way… This can’t be true…” She whispered. She didn’t want to believe that her life had all been a lie, that she and her peers had been brainwashed into child soldiers. She started shaking uncontrollably.

Suddenly, Serena felt Yuto's hands on her shoulders, grounding her. Despite his distrust of her at first, he seemed to understand her pain. "I know this is a lot to take in." Yuto told her. Serena's eyes widened. She couldn't comprehend how Yuto could be so kind to her, despite what her people did to his city. His presence was suddenly so calming, as if she could tell him anything. 'How can you trust me so easily? After what my people did to you?' Serena asked tearfully. "You're not like them." Shay cut in. She looked up at him. "It's clear that Duel Academy has lied to you your whole life."

It hurt to hear those words out loud. Duel Academy was all Serena had ever known. Accepting that they're right… It means accepting that everything I've known is a lie. She slumped to the ground. I don't know anything. Who am I now?

It hurt Yuto and Shay to see this girl in despair, even if she used to be on the enemy's side. Perhaps they were biased, as she did look a lot like Ruri. This was a new experience for the two of them, as they had both previously assumed that everyone at Duel Academy was an enemy… But it seems now they have to understand that some of Duel Academy are actually innocents who have been brainwashed.

How many of the people we've killed from Duel Academy were innocents? How many of them were

just like Serena, who have been kept imprisoned and fed lies? They're whole life and existence was to serve this school, without them even realizing it… Yuto felt sick just thinking about it. He felt dizzy all of a sudden, and a heavy weight felt like it dropped on him. Yuto thought about Serena's words. "How can you trust me so easily? After what my people did to you?" I could ask you the same thing…

44. Origins: Serena Kyoya Part 1

The episode starts with a 6 year old Serena with her unnamed parents. “Have fun at Duel Academy! We’ll send you letters every month!” Her mother promised. ‘We’ll miss you. We won’t see you in person until graduation.’ Her father lamented. Serena hugged her parents. “It’s okay, I will learn so much! I will be the best duelist ever!” She vowed.

Serena is seen getting on the boat to Duel Academy island with several other young children. She is seen waving goodbye to her parents.

Upon arrival, an unnamed Professor greets them all. “Welcome to Duel Academy island! Your new home until graduation! You will be taught dueling alongside your regular education, and will get to have wondrous hands-on opportunities with dueling in the future!” He hands them their rooms and schedules.

Serena is in awe of the place. It was so grand! She accidentally made a wrong turn and ended up in the Professor’s throne room. “Oh! I got lost! Sorry mister!” Serena exclaimed as she saw the Professor on his throne. He seemed to stare at her from a

distance. ‘Are you Serena Kyoya?’ He asked. She nodded. “Ah, perfect. You know, I’m going to be your mentor soon.” Leo said. “Really?” She asked. “Really. Now go get adjusted first.” He told her.

We later see Serena being taught lessons by a teacher. “The main principle of Duel Academy is honor. We always must treat our opponents with utmost respect, and do the right thing even when it’s difficult. However, the most important principle of all is that the Professor’s word is law. Anything he tells us to do we do, without question.”

The scene changes to Serena beating an opponent in a duel, and the two dip their heads politely. “Since Serena has won fair and square, she has the glory, while the loser gets nothing.” The teacher declares. The class laughed at the loser, but Serena felt bad. She reached out to give her opponent a hand, but the teacher slapped her hand away. ‘Don’t taint your honor with this loser!’ He yelled at her. “Only victors deserve respect!”

A time jump happens, and Serena is now 8. She walks into the professor’s room. “Good, you’re right on time. Come, we need to do a scan of your memories.” Leo told her. ‘Whyyy? We’ve done this a million times!’ Serena protested. “I know, but you have forgotten memories buried deep within you.” Leo explained. “Can’t you just let me get back to

dueling?” Serena asked. “After the scan.”
The scene cuts to a device being on Serena’s eyes, as if they were ridiculously large rectangular binoculars. Leo is seen with an unnamed scientist off to the side. “Still no traces of her old memories.” The unnamed person tells him. The Professor sighed. ‘Alright. Report to me if anything new happens.’
The scene changes to Serena dueling several students and winning with her Lunalights. “Alright! I did it!” She declares. The students gazed up at her in awe, impressed by her talents. “Serena, the professor needs you.” An unmanned teacher tells her. Serena rolled her eyes. “Come onnnn I wanna duel more!” She complained. “You know the rules.” He scolds her.
Serena enters the room with the Professor, and a young boy with pink hair. “I have decided to look after you two more closely.” Leo informed them. ‘That’s not fair! You already look after me enough!’ Serena protested. The young boy just nodded slowly. “Serena, you know that I have to keep you safe.” Leo reasoned. “Why? I can protect myself!” She protested. “That’s confidential information.” He said.
A time skip ensues, and Serena is now 11. She is known and feared by many of her classmates, as

they know how strong she is. Everytime she walks by them, she hears whispers of “she’ll definitely make it on the invasion squad” and ‘she’ll go far in life.’

Despite hearing this, Serena is constantly being told off by the Professor for doing something wrong. “You can’t go patrol with them, you’re too young.” The Professor told her. “Why not? You let Yuri go!” Serena accused him. “Things are different for you.” He said vaguely. “Why?” He ignored her. “Why can’t you answer me?” She demanded, but he kept giving her the silent treatment. This continued on for days.

We see Serena walk outside, and students avoiding her. This shows that despite her strength, she has no friends. She is understandably short-tempered and has little social skills due to the Professor keeping her isolated.

Of course, then the scene where Serena meets Declan happens, which I don’t need to write all over again. We see her locked up, and Leo goes to visit her. “Why can’t you see that I’m worthy?” Serena demanded. ‘You’re not ready yet.’ He says. “I just want to live my life without you butting in!” Serena yells. Leo narrowed his eyes at her. “And what life would that be? You can’t do anything without me.

You’re nothing without Duel Academy. This is your home forever.”

45. Origins: Serena Kyoya Part 2

The episode begins with Serena still locked up. I just want to prove I'm worth something to you… She thought. I'm sorry I overreacted.
The scene changes to Serena standing alone in her room, and the camera pans over to the letters on her desk. Why did they have to stop sending letters? She thought miserably. I'm all alone… I'm nothing without the Professor!
Serena is seen running back to the Professor in his throne room. "I'm sorry I overreacted." She said. 'Did you finally find it in you to apologize after realizing I was right? That you had no one else left?' The Professor asked. She nodded. "Just so you know… Your parents died in an accident. You have nowhere else to go after you graduate, so you'll have to stay here." He dropped the bomb on her. "What? That's why they stopped sending letters…?" Serena cried. "That seems to be the case." Leo told her. Serena cried harder, but the Professor just stood there. "I'm the only person left in your life who cares for you. Nobody else will…"
Serena looked up at him. "Why not?" She asked.

‘The students are afraid of you. Their fear has turned into anger and jealousy. You won’t have friends if you’re constantly proving yourself better than others. You have no one but me.’ Leo convinces her.
“Is that why no one talks to me?” Serena asked, desperate. Leo nodded. “But… What about Yuri? You talked to both of us, so surely he must like me?” Leo shook his head. “You mean nothing to him. He hates you.” Shock pulsed through Serena.
“Since you are in this position… You must choose. Do you really care what others think of you, or do you want to prove yourself, and show your strength?” Leo asked her. ‘I want to prove myself! I don’t need them!’ Serena said bitterly. “That’s right. They don’t need you, and you don’t need them. This is how you’ll get stronger.” Leo coaxed.
From then on, Serena is seen to be more distant from people. Whenever she crosses paths with another student, she is rude to them. “Watch where you’re going!” She hissed at someone.
Time passes, and Serena is 14. She just got back from the Professor locking her up again. She runs through the halls angrily. I’m sick of this! Why does the Professor keep locking me up and isolating me? Doesn’t he want me to prove myself? She puts on a robe. That’s it! I’m leaving here. It’s clear that the Professor doesn’t even like me anymore. She runs

into a room and steals a file that says “Revival Zero.”
Serena is seen stealing a boat and sailing away from the Fusion Dimension. She reads the file in shock. “There’s other summoning methods?” She wonders out loud. ‘Other Dimensions?’ She flips through the file, and sees pictures. “Who are these people?” Serena reads the names: Standard Dimension: Z counterpart Yuya Sakaki. R counterpart Yuzu Hiiragi. XYZ Dimension: Z counterpart Yuto Ikari. R counterpart Ruri Obsidian. Synchro Dimension: Z counterpart Yugo Damare. R counterpart Rin Yukimi. She flips the file to the cover, to see her and Yuri on it. “What?” Serena gasps. She flips to the final page, which cryptically says, “once all the R pieces are put together, we can return to the origin, and all will be well. She will be brought back. The Z pieces must never be brought together, or else everything will be destroyed.” Most of this goes over Serena’s head, and she can’t figure out what it means.
Is the reason the Professor kept Yuri and I so isolated because of this? Whatever the heck this is? Serena wonders. Whatever. I’ll prove to him once and for all that I’m worth something. He’ll have to put me on a squad after I find that XYZ user!
Whewww that was a depressing episode. While on

the surface it might not seem as depressing as Yuto's episode, you have to consider that Serena is being gaslit and manipulated the heck out of by this domineering leader. Not only that, but her parents are dead, she's being isolated from others, and she is literally in an abusive relationship. No wonder Serena is so outwardly angry! She's had to put up with the Professor's manipulation and just wants so badly to be heard. Her situation is frustrating as heck, as she has no one but the Professor, who treats her terribly. The way he manipulates her and Yuri gives insight into the Professor's personality, and it's rather disturbing.

I wanted an origins episode to cover Serena's complex feelings toward her abuser, and why she's so wishy washy early on. It also serves the purpose of showing that there are innocents on both sides of the war, and that some of these child soldiers who committed mass murder in the XYZ Dimension are just heavily gaslit. War propaganda and brainwashing is a common thing for countries at war, and I like showing that whole social psychological topic at work. Not to mention, because they are all literally children they are more likely to believe an authoritative adult figure considering that they are at a school at sea without their parents. I will keep reminding you that most of

the characters in this series are literally children. Young teenagers. Yeah, let that sink in.

46. Union

The episode begins with Henrietta in the VIP booth. “Where is Reiji?” Henrietta asks Claude. ‘I’m not sure… “He admits.” You’re one of his trusted assistants! You should know where he is!’ Henrietta yells at him. “He told me to stay here!” Claude insisted. Henrietta walked out of the booth angrily, prompting Claude to shake his head in exasperation.
Meanwhile, Serena is still crying on the ground while Yuto is in a daze. “Now that you know the truth, will you fight on our side?” Shay asked her. She didn’t respond. Serena knew that it was what she had to do, but she couldn’t help but dwell in her feelings.
‘It hurts to look at you right now.’ Shay said to Serena through gritted teeth. She looked up at him. “Shay…” Yuto said quietly. “You look exactly like my sister… She was taken by Duel Academy, as if we hadn’t lost enough.” Shay said in a hollow voice. “I’m… Sorry about what happened to you. I hope one day you get her back.” Serena apologized.
Shay knelt down to Serena’s level. “We will. Duel Academy’s days of ruining peoples’ lives will end. They’ve already ruined mine and yours, and I’m

sick of grieving. The only thing to do from here is to fight back." Shay declared, which triggered something in Serena. He extended a hand out to her. "Will you fight beside us?" Shay asked again. After a moment's hesitation, Serena nodded, and took Shay's hand. The two stood up together, and she couldn't help but notice that despite Shay's injuries, he looked so strong next to her. This is the power of the XYZ resistance… To keep going even when things are hopeless. They're the ones with true honor.

Yuto watched Serena and Shay stand up together. He was surprised by how gentle and uplifting Shay was being. It's been so long since I've seen him talk like that… Yuto met Serena's gaze and his face softened. "Welcome to the Lancers, Serena."

Meanwhile, Yuzu and Yugo are watching the duel continuing. "That kid's got guts. I respect that." Yugo remarked. Yuzu didn't respond. 'Hey, are you alright?' He asked. "No, not really." Yuzu admitted. "Hey, if that creep scared you… Then don't worry. I'll protect you." Yugo reassured her. "It's not that." Yuzu said. Well, it is partially. "What is it then?" Yugo asked.

"Well, have you ever had someone close to you treat you like their comforter? As if you have to carry all their burdens and always manage their emotions? As

if your relationship with them prevents you from being happy and moving forward?" Yuzu asked. 'Is this about Yuya?' Yugo asked. She nodded sadly. "Well, I don't think I've ever had a friendship like that. The only person who I've been close to is Rin… But if that's how things are between you and Yuya, then maybe you should move forward without him." Yugo advised. Yuzu stared over at Yuya for a second out of habit. "You're right. Thanks." She said. Yugo smiled. "Wow, I said some deep stuff without even skipping a beat! I can say smart things every now and then!" Yugo exclaimed. Yuzu nodded. "I guess you can."

Back with Yuya and Reiji, the duel is at a standstill. "If one of us were to die in a fight, what would you do? You don't exactly have that many of us to count as an army." Yuya remarked. 'You're right, I don't. However, I believe that if we play our cards right, our limited numbers won't matter. If push comes to shove, then we can always recruit people from other Dimensions.' Reiji responded. "What makes you so sure?" Yuya challenged. "I've been planning this out for years." Reiji said.

This scene changes to Dennis and Sylvio. "Yuya really puts on a spectacular performance!" Dennis exclaimed. Sylvio nodded. 'It is impressive… But I'll catch up to him!' Sylvio declared. "Oooh!

Competition!” Dennis remarked gleefully. Sylvio curled his bangs with his fingers. “I’m going to be the best dueltainer in the world!” He declared.
Gong and Riley stand together in silence. This poor kid… They shouldn’t have to be forced into an interdimensional war. Gong thought. He noticed how fixated Riley was on the duel; at least, compared to everyone else. Gong looked around: it seemed as if they were the only two respectfully watching the duel. Dennis and Sylvio were off in their own worlds, Serena, Shay, and Yuto were all standing far away to talk in private, and Yuzu and Yugo weren’t even looking at the duel. As much as Gong wanted to support Yuya in his duel against Reiji, he couldn’t help but feel socially left out.
The duel continues on, until Yuya finally loses. The rest of the Lancers finally look and watch this happen. Crouching, Yuya tries to compose himself. Reiji walks over toward him. “Better now?” He asked. Yuya nodded, putting a smile on his face. ‘I’m ready!’ He resolved. “Lucky enough for you, I can understand why Yuto approved of you. Your dueling ability was impressive, but your resolve was unyielding. Those are two very vital traits for a Lancer to have.” Reiji commented. “Uh, thanks?” Yuya said awkwardly.
I already knew Yuya would be a Lancer. I just

wanted to duel him again to see how much he's grown… In terms of dueling, he's gotten way better. Mentally, he's still got a long way to go. Yuya will have to learn the hard way that his father's philosophies won't get him far in an interdimensional war… Reiji thought.
"Everyone! We will cross dimensions before our first raid on Duel Academy. It would be good to gather information from the other dimensions that we could use to our advantage… And of course, extra members wouldn't hurt." Reiji announced. Shay gritted his teeth. "I thought we would be going to Duel Academy immediately after this." He muttered. Yuto didn't say anything. I thought so too, but I get why Declan wants to go to other dimensions first. Gathering resources and warning other dimensions about Duel Academy would be a better move than just going by ourselves.
'We're… Crossing dimensions?' Sylvio reacted in shock. Dennis gave him a light pat on the back. "Hey, it'll be fun! We can spread our dueltaining to new people!" Dennis reassured him. Sylvio looked down. "I suppose you're right…" He said, subtly clutching his crystalized pendant.
"We will be going to the Synchro Dimension first… So please prepare to leave this dimension by tomorrow afternoon." Reiji said, and he started to

walk away. ‘Wait! What about the tournament?’ Yuya asked. “I’ll tell Paradise City myself that the tournament will be canceled due to the threat of the interdimensional war.” Reiji explained, and left everyone in the parking lot alone.

The episode ends with Nico Smiley announcing to the audience that he has a “message from Declan Akaba.” Reiji’s face appears on the screen, and explains that ‘the duelists in the battle royal intercepted hostile invaders from the Fusion Dimension, and successfully fended them off.’ He showed footage of this happening, with everyone in the crowd being shocked, especially the Yusho Duel School. “However, due to the threat of an interdimensional war, I am saddened to inform you all that the tournament must be canceled for safety reasons. The LDS will work hard to defend this dimension from future invaders, while I will lead a team of elite young duelists to fight in this war. Make sure you all brush up on your dueling skills and be prepared. We will do our best to take care of the invaders.” Reiji said, and the screen turned off, leaving the crowd speechless and in a sad silence.

47. Origins: Reiji Akaba Part 1

The episode begins with Reiji as a 6 year old, visiting his father at work at the Leo Institute. “Wow! It’s such a big room!” He exclaims. Henrietta smiles at him. ‘Our boy has grown so much!’ She says. “Yes, he has.” Leo agrees. “Can you duel me when we get home?” Reiji asked. “Of course!” Leo responds, smiling at his son. This scene shows that Henrietta was once a caring person.

A montage of Leo hanging out with his son occurs, implying the two of them were very close. We see Leo teaching Reiji things about the company, dueling, and about specific technology. “I developed the Solid Vision technology a few years ago to make dueling more realistic. You can touch your monsters and even ride them; but attacks won’t hurt you.” Leo explained. ‘Wow! How did you do that?’ Reiji asked. “With a lot of practice.” Leo simply said.

A scene takes place where Reiji is seen with his father and Yusho Sakaki. It is implied that Yusho was a family friend. “Your dueling has improved a lot!” Yusho praises him. Reiji smiles at this. ‘You might just be the next big thing one day!’

A time skip happens where a year goes by, and Reiji tries to get his father's attention. "I'm sorry Reiji, but I'm busy. I'll spend some time with you tomorrow." Leo tells him. "Oh, okay." Reiji walks off, disappointed.

Reiji asks Henrietta what has been keeping Leo so busy, and she admits that she doesn't know. We can tell in this scene that she's trying to reassure him, but she has doubts of her own. What is he hiding?

As Henrietta's suspicions of Leo grows, Reiji begins to notice that his mother and father seem to fight more often. "Why do you have to constantly keep us in the dark?" Henrietta asks. 'I'm just working on advancements for the Solid Vision system.' Leo said. "I know that's a lie! You finished that project years ago!" Reiji hid behind the doorway of his home covering his ears. He always got scared whenever they fought.

One time, Reiji walked in on them arguing when he got back from school. They saw that he was covering his ears, and got mad. "Do you realize how rude that looks, Reiji?" Henrietta demanded. 'I'm sorry.' Reiji apologized, starting to cry. The sound of his mother yelling at him scared him. "Leave us alone." Leo yelled at him, which made Reiji run up the stairs. "Look what you did! You scared him!" Henrietta accused her husband. Reiji could hear

them through the floorboards, so he jumped out the window and got hurt. It should be noted that anytime there is a scene of Reiji hearing his parents arguing, the scene's tone is changed so that things start to get blurry, and you hear the sound of a heart beating. This is meant to be stressful to the viewer, so that they can feel what a young Reiji is feeling.

Reiji is then seen opening up to Yusho about his parents fighting and Leo being absent. "Look on the bright side: it could be much worse. I'm sure you'll get over it with time. At least you have me to talk to." Yusho tells him.

Once Reiji is 8, things fall apart further. Henrietta told him sadly, "I'm sorry Reiji, you're going to have to have a small lunch today. We haven't had power in days… Your father has been slacking off lately." She said through gritted teeth.

At the Leo Institute, Reiji goes to talk to his father, but Leo rudely tells him to "go away." The tone of his voice scares Reiji. "But… Mother's worried about you, and I…" He tries to say. "Go away!" Leo yells at him, and he runs.

Reiji goes to Henrietta and tells her what Leo said, which makes her angry.

Later that night, when Leo returns from work, he says something that changes everything. "I'm leaving, Henrietta." Leo tells her. 'What? You can't

leave! What about your company? What about the electricity that you still need to pay off? What about us?' Henrietta yells at him. Reiji is in the same room, shocked by his father's words. "You two can handle things on your own." Leo tells them. "So you just expect us to pick up after you?" Henrietta yelled. "If you want to make a living, it seems you have no choice." Leo responded coldly. "Why are you even leaving?" She demands. "You don't need to know that." He tells her. They both start yelling louder, which prompts Reiji to start crying. "Please! Stay for Reiji, at least!" Henrietta begs. Leo shakes his head. "I can't! This is too important!" Henrietta's eyes flashed in anger. "More important than your own wife and son?" Leo didn't answer that. "I can't promise that I'll ever return." He told her. "What?" Henrietta screeched. She threw a glass vase at his head, and managed to make a long cut that started bleeding.

Reiji was shocked by his mother's violent behavior. Leo turned to leave without saying goodbye. This made Reiji panic more, as he couldn't even see his father's gaze. "Don't leave me!" He yelled, but Leo ignored him and closed the door.

Later, we see Henrietta angrily go into Leo's office and trash it. She violently breaks his desk and throws his files on the ground in her fury. Reiji

watches from the doorway in horror.
The episode ends with Reiji and Henrietta still processing Leo's sudden departure. "It's up to us to fix the mess Leo has made." Henrietta said angrily. 'Together we'll take over Leo's company, and we'll take over the world of dueling.' She conspired. By this point, Reiji was already a known duelist who was very strong. Strong enough to compete in the Arc League Championship. "You'll win the Youth Division, and then become a pro. You'll be the new face of the Leo corporation." Henrietta told him. Reiji nodded, and clenched his fist. "That jerk. He'll regret the day he left us." Reiji declared.

48. Origins: Reiji Akaba Part 2

The episode begins with Reiji learning that Yusho left shortly after his father, which triggers something inside of him. He throws a picture of Yusho, Leo, Henrietta, and him at the wall in anger. That traitor! Yusho promised that he'd be there for me, but then he goes and pulls this! He was never on my side; only my father's!

When Reiji is 11, we see him poking around inside his father's office in the Leo Institute. By this point, he and his mother have successfully taken over the company. He finds an interdimensional teleporter, and he accidentally crosses into the Fusion Dimension. Reiji discovers he is at Duel Academy, where he hears yelling. I'm not going to write this scene out again.

After Leo sends Reiji back to the Standard Dimension, he tells his mother what he learned. Gritting his teeth in anger, he thinks, Leo Akaba, I will stop you! I won't let you ruin anyone else's lives ever again!

A time skip ensues, where Reiji is seen winning repeatedly in the Arc League Championship every year, but the audience notices how dead inside he

looks. As he grows older, he becomes colder. Reiji has become a pro at 13, but he doesn't look happy about it. He constantly has a stoic, robotic expression. After becoming a pro duelist, he stopped making major public appearances.

We see Reiji pass the Yusho Duel School on a walk, which makes him remember Yusho. How pathetic. They're trying so hard to preserve that traitor's legacy with a school that reinforces his toxic beliefs. One of these days, that school will run out of money and I won't ever have to hear about Yusho ever again.

The episode ends with Reiji and his mother in the dark room of the Leo Institute. The room used to belong to his father, but all of the things that were once his are gone. Reiji notably has no decorations; everything is just plain and depressing. The mood of this scene overall is like a depressed person who is hauling up in their room. Henrietta criticizes Reiji for stopping his public appearances, implying that her relationship with Reiji had gotten worse. "I have to focus on preparing for an interdimensional war." Reiji told his mother. She tries to get him to be a pro duelist and work on preparations, but he refuses. "This is my full-time job now. Protecting the citizens of Paradise City is more important than anything else. One day I will pick candidates from

LDS to join me in a rebellion against Duel Academy and stop my father’s tyranny once and for all.”

49. Ignorance is Bliss

The episode begins with Sylvio in his rich mansion packing things in a fancy travel bag. Instead of his usual bubbly, extra self, Sylvio is melancholy. He has a somber expression on his face and is holding onto his crystalized pendant; implying that it now represents both of his dead parents. The scene also makes an interesting point about how despite having money and the honor of being a Lancer, Sylvio is depressed.

As Sylvio finishes packing, he stares at his father's card. His mind flashes back to how Yuto defeated him. I can't believe he's a Lancer. Why would Reiji do this? He knows that he killed my father, so why would he let that jerk in? It's not fair, god dang it!

Meanwhile, we see Yuya back at his house telling his mother about his decision to become a Lancer. "What? You just now decided to tell me?" Yoko asked. Yuya apologizes, but Yoko raises an eyebrow. 'Why are you becoming a Lancer?' She asks suddenly. "What do you mean?" He asks. "I mean that I know my son better than anyone; you may be kind, but you wouldn't become a soldier in an interdimensional war without something to gain

from it. What are you gaining from this?" Yoko asked. "No, I don't have an ulterior motive! I just want to help out!" Yuya tried to deny. Yoko narrowed her eyes at him.
"Oh I get it. You're trying to look for your father, aren't you?" Yoko accused Yuya. 'So what if I am? Wouldn't that make you happy? Wouldn't that make everyone happy?' He asked. Yoko shook her head. "You don't understand… I wish I didn't have to tell you this, but I have no choice: the day Yusho left was the day that I was finally freed." She told him. Yuya's eyes widened in horror. "What do you mean? You and dad always looked happy together!" Yoko's eyes flashed in anger. "I've hid the truth about how I felt about your father for years, Yuya! I hoped that you would learn to get over him and stop living in his shadow, but here you are about to go on a suicide mission just to find the person who abandoned us!" Yuya couldn't believe this was happening. His mother hated his father? She would never mention dad in a negative light before! He thought.
"I don't understand! Why do you hate him?" Yuya asked. 'No, the question isn't why do I hate him! The question is why do you like him? Why do you aspire to be just like the man who lured everyone into his cruel, twisted games?' She asked. Yuya couldn't understand what his mother was saying.

“I’m becoming a Lancer, no matter what!” Yuya resolved. “No, you aren’t! I’m not letting my son get himself killed over a negligent father!” Yoko yelled at him. “He isn’t what you think! I’m sure there’s a reason for all of this!” Yuya retorted.
“I see now that reason isn’t going to stop you. Alrighty, then. Let’s duel! Maybe that will make you come to your senses!” Yoko declared. ‘Duel?’ Yuya asked. He didn’t even know his mother could duel. “If you win, you can go on your suicide mission, but if I win, you have to stay here!” Yuya could tell that his mother wasn’t going to take no for an answer, so he accepted her challenge.
The two headed down into their massive, secret basement that Yuya had no idea existed. There was a bar, dance floor, and broken glass on the ground. “Mom, what were you doing with this?” Yuya asked in shock. Yoko didn’t answer. They began their duel. Yoko explains to Yuya about how Yusho’s was toxic. “Yusho would use up all his ‘positive’ energy on the audience, but then come home and release his anger out on me! Whenever he saw that you were upset by us arguing, he’d try to convince you that I was the crazy one and that he was dealing with his ‘crazy wife.’ Yusho would secretly teach you to not take care of yourself in favor of others, and would manipulate you to be just like him!” All of this

shocked Yuya. ‘No way! I don’t remember that happening!’ He tried to protest. “That’s what he would tell me, too… But I know that it all happened. I’m the only one who claims to remember…” Yoko said in a somber voice. They resumed the duel.
Later on in the duel, Yuya said, “you know, I’m not just doing this for dad. I’m doing this for Yuzu, too. I can’t just let her be a part of an interdimensional war on her own!” Yoko seemed surprised by this revelation. ‘Yuzu’s a part of this, too?’ Yuya nodded. “Well, I think that if I win, then you two are both staying.” This change in the proposition surprised Yuya. “Fine! If I win, Yuzu and I are going to find dad together!” Yuya said angrily.
Yoko narrowed her eyes at Yuya. “You’re so selfish.” She told him. This hurt Yuya to hear. ‘How is finding someone and protecting someone selfish?’ He asked. “Be honest with yourself: you’re only joining this war to find your negligent father and so that you can love up on Yuzu. You don’t care about the innocents, or the threat of the enemy. You’re only focused on what matters to you.” Yoko accused. Yuya’s face flushed at the mention of Yuzu. “No! I care about the innocents, and…!” Yuya tried to protest. “I knew it! This was all for Yusho and Yuzu!” She declared. Yuya couldn’t find the words to respond; his face was as red as a tomato.

The duel ended with Yuya winning, which made Yoko start to cry. “I promise I’ll come back, mom.” Yuya tried to reassure her. She stared at him in anger. “You don’t understand anything! You can’t guarantee your survival. I hope you enjoy seeing the harsh realities in front of you! Maybe that will wake you up.” She retorted, and ran back to the house. Yuya was left alone in the basement, the tone somber. Despite having won the duel, Yuya has lost the respect of his mother. What she said… That can’t be true. The Yusho I know would never treat her that badly! He never treated me badly, so why would he do those things to her?

The scene changes to Gong leaving his dojo with some things packed. His clan has gathered around him to say goodbye. “Anytime you are lost or in despair, remember your roots. Remember what you have learned here.” His father said, and he bowed his head. Gong bowed in return, and set off. The sun was starting to rise in the distance. He’s right. My clan’s teachings are always the answer, so I will remember that. But they aren’t always right. Gong thought of his friendship with Yuya. As long as I don’t carry his burdens anymore, we can still be friends. Yuya’s a good kid, but he needs to learn how to fight his own battles. Maybe this experience in the Lancers will be what he needs…

The episode ends with not a central character, but Claude. He is seen entering what is assumed to be his house. “Honey, I’m home!” He yells. Suddenly, a tall, dark haired man who is also wearing a business suit comes out. The two kiss and embrace. ‘It’s been a while since we’ve both had a break from work.’ The man tells Claude. Claude agrees, saying, “Declan’s going to finally start his plan of crossing dimensions tomorrow. I won’t be on duty until he comes back… And since his departure will be low-key, I’m still gettin’ paid.” The other man caresses his cheek. “How about we go out? It’s been a while since we’ve been on a date.” Claude smiles at him. “Oh Steve, you know me so well.” We see the two hold hands, and the camera focuses on the matching rings, implying that they’re husbands.

50. Impermanence

The episode begins with Shay getting discharged from the hospital in the morning. He, Yuto, and Reiji walk toward the Leo Institute. “Your internal injuries may have been healed, but I would advise you to not make any more reckless moves anytime soon.” Reiji told him. Shay scoffed. ‘It’s not like you care about us. You see the Lancers as just pawns in your little game of revenge against your father; pawns that you can replace at any time.’ Shay retorted. Yuto glared at Shay with sudden intensity. “Do as he says, Shay. We’ve come this far to finding Ruri and taking down Duel Academy; following orders isn’t the end of the world.” He reasoned. Reiji gave Shay a cold stare. “I agree. You accepted our deal. Besides, this benefits us both.” Reiji said, and he pushed past Shay, making sure to roughly brush his shoulder. Yuto stayed at Shay’s side as Reiji walked ahead.

The scene transitions to the late morning. Sylvio arrives at the Leo Institute building. All of the Lancers have already gathered early, as they are all anxious for the upcoming war. “Good morning, everyone.” Reiji announces. ‘We were scheduled to

go this afternoon, but since we're all here, it wouldn't hurt to go earlier.'

Sylvio stepped forward. "No! I came early to settle a score!" He declared, pointing his finger at Yuto. "You carded my father!" He accused him, and showed everyone Furio Sawatari trapped in a card. Yuto was shocked by this accusation; he knew that he hadn't carded anyone. Shay scoffed. "Oh, him? I carded him because he was a nuisance."

Before Sylvio could react, Yuto immediately glared at Shay and said, "NO. I carded him." Yuto obviously knew that he didn't card Furio, but he was taking the blame for Shay's sake. "You'll pay for carding him!" Sylvio yelled, activating his duel disk. Yuto said nothing, and silently accepted the challenge.

Meanwhile, it was obvious to the other Lancers that Shay had actually carded Furio, but Yuto was taking the fall for him. They didn't speak up about it, though. They all thought that letting Sylvio process this was for the best. I had no idea Sylvio's father had been carded… No wonder he's upset. Yuya thought. Maybe that's why he was so angry during our duel.

Yuto could tell that this was a touchy subject for Sylvio, and didn't even try to deny it. After all, he understood that if Sylvio went into this war with a

grudge on one of his own, then they wouldn't get far. He isn't ready for the horrors of the battlefield, if this is how he reacts to his father being carded. Yuto thought, his eyes revealing a hint of sadness. Still, he's just an innocent. He shouldn't have to be a Lancer… He still needs time to process his loss, before he is faced with more of it.

They began their duel, and Sylvio notably switched back to using his Monarch deck, something that Yuzu took note of. Is Sylvio so desperate for revenge that he wants to use the same deck he first dueling Yuto with? She wondered.

Later in the duel, an exchange happens between them. "Why did you card him? What gave you the right to take away the last parent I had?" Sylvio yelled. Yuto didn't say anything, which angered him further. 'I should make you suffer for what you've done! Do you know anything about how it feels to lose a parent you loved?' Sylvio accused. Yuto closed his eyes, having a disturbing flashback to the invasion where he found his mother's blood-soaked body buried underneath debris. Blood spilled from her hollow skin. "Mom? Mom! Please… This can't be real!" Yuto cried out. He remembered how he never got the chance to even give her a proper burial, as it was blown up by an explosion.

Yuto realized that Sylvio had stopped yelling all of a

sudden. He opened his eyes, and was taken back to the present. Yuto was surprised to feel water running off his cheek. Sylvio was stunned to see his enemy crying. He didn't know how to process it. He knew this whole duel felt… off. Yuto was offering no pushback, or even bothering to defend himself. At first I thought he was mocking me… But… Sylvio knew this wasn't right, but it hurt too much to not get some sort of revenge. I'd rather be angry than sad…

"I do." Yuto spoke for the first time since the beginning of the duel. Sylvio was in shock. Instead of asking why Yuto would card his father if he understood how it felt, Sylvio just stood there, frozen. It suddenly hit him that this duel was meaningless; it was a total waste of the Lancers' time.

"Do what you feel is right." Yuto simply told him. Sylvio still stood there, frozen. I can't do this… Something deep down told Sylvio that this was wrong, even if Yuto had carded Furio. He suddenly couldn't find it in his heart to continue. What was it that made him hesitate? Something about seeing such a battle-hardened, scary-looking warrior like Yuto crying and offering no pushback… It just triggered something inside him. He knows exactly what it feels like… He's still grieving.

Sylvio lowered his duel disk. “I surrender.” He said in a low voice. Everyone watching was shocked. ‘I can’t do this.’ Sylvio whispered, and turned to walk away. “Wait.” Yuto called out softly. Sylvio turned to see a truly sad sight: the image of a scarred warrior on his knees, looking up at him with eyes full of grief, as if his whole existence was nothing but pain. It was beyond depressing… Calling it pathetic would be an understatement. Sylvio couldn’t bear looking into the eyes of a man who was truly broken, so he had to look down so he didn’t start tearing up at the sheer sight.

“I’m sorry.” Yuto said, his voice hollow and tired, as if he had comforted many others before Sylvio over the death of loved ones… Yet, in his voice, despite having gone through so much, Sylvio could tell that he could never get used to the pain. No matter what, it was fresh everytime. Sylvio immediately understood. This guy… How many people has he given a part of himself up for? How many did he watch die to get to this point? Why… Why is he the one apologizing…? This prompted Sylvio to walk over toward Yuto, his vision growing blurry.

Once Sylvio arrived at the crouching warrior, he looked at the pathetic sight. This man had been through too much. No. Sylvio realized, as he stared into Yuto’s eyes. He isn’t even a man. He’s still a

child. Looking at Yuto up close made Sylvio realize just how young he looked, which ultimately made him break down. He fell to the ground next to the boy.

“You’re so pathetic to look at… I can’t even be mad anymore… Dang it!” Sylvio cried out, and he looked at the ground. “I’m the one who should be apologizing! When I look at you… I… I’m sorry…” Sylvio said, his voice shaking. He couldn’t organize his thoughts clearly… He couldn’t describe in words how he felt looking at Yuto… Sympathy? Depressed? No, it was deeper than that. Something that made Sylvio realize that getting revenge on this broken soul would do nothing… It would only cause more suffering, and ultimately, wouldn’t bring his father back. It wouldn’t be the right thing to do.

As Sylvio tried to organize his thoughts, he felt two hands grip his shoulders. He gasped, and looked up to see Yuto staring into his eyes. He was shocked to see that Yuto’s eyes weren’t full of grief anymore; but something else. Does he pity me? Sylvio wondered. “You don’t have to burden yourself with this war. This is our fight.” Yuto told him. They both looked toward the other Lancers.

Speaking of which, the other Lancers were speechless watching this whole thing play out. They didn’t know how to describe their feelings watching

such a scene either, but Yuzu seemed to be the closest to understanding something: watching Sylvio, this usually pampered, spoiled brat seeing Yuto crying and the two of them connecting over shared loss… I don't even know… It was inexplicably beautiful.

Yuto stared into Sylvio's eyes; he could see it so clearly. The eyes of a child who had just experienced their first loss, but still… they shined so bright compared to his. I don't think he's ready. I don't want to see him hurt anymore… Yuto thought. Just thinking about watching an innocent's heart be shattered by witnessing war broke his heart. Yuto thought of Ruri, and how horrified she was after she had accidentally killed someone in self-defense. I don't want to see anyone go through that anymore.

"This doesn't have to be your burden to bear… Go back home, process your grief, and live your life in comfort. After we return, Duel Academy's reign of terror will end, and everything will be at peace. You'll never have to worry about war ever again." Yuto said, and immediately caught himself talking to Sylvio as if he were talking to Ruri.

Sylvio suddenly looked up at Yuto, a look of sudden defiance in his eyes. "Is it your burden to bear, then?" Sylvio challenged. 'This is my fight, not yours.' Yuto told him. Sylvio shook his head. "What

life in comfort? My parents are dead… I'm a bitter loser who can't accept impermanence… I'm all alone." He explained. "If you commit to this path, there's no going back." Yuto warned. "I know. After seeing my father in a card, I don't think I can go back… This may have started as your fight, but it's my fight now, too." Sylvio told him.

Yuto looked at Sylvio in shock. Is that fear in his gaze? Sylvio wondered. "You don't know what you're getting yourself into." Yuto warned him, gripping his shoulders tighter. I can't see another innocent go through what Ruri went through… Yuto thought, with desperation in his eyes. Sylvio stared back at him in determination. "I can't go back to my old life… Besides, you told me once that I deserve the pain and sorrow of the battlefield, and you were right. I need to be a Lancer." He pressed. Yuto was shocked that Sylvio remembered his words. He really has been set on the path of enlightenment… My words actually got through to him. But… I told him that before…

Before Yuto could argue, Reiji interrupted. "It is almost time to leave. It's too late for Sylvio to back out now." He told them. Sylvio and Yuto exchanged a glance, and Yuto released Sylvio from his grip. They stood up together.

The remaining Lancers were still in shock of what

they had just witnessed, but Reiji snapped them back to reality. “Everyone, I am about to pass out special LDS cards that will transport you to the Synchro Dimension. When you receive your card, wait until the count of three, and then press the button that appears on your duel disk screen.” Reiji instructed.
Reiji slowly hands all the cards out. “I can’t believe we’re doing this.” Yugo admitted. “I’m finally going back home.” Maybe I can look for leads on the creep…
Yuzu stared at Yugo, lost in thought. Yugo’s girlfriend got kidnapped by Yuri… The same one who captured Ruri and tried to capture me. What’s going on?
“I’m soooo ready!” Dennis declared in excitement.
“You shouldn’t be.” Serena muttered. What a fool… He has no idea what he’s in for. The looming threat of Duel Academy isn’t something to be excited for. She thought. Foolish girl, she doesn’t know what she’s in for! Duel Academy will take her back! Dennis thought.
Gong closed his eyes. I’m ready. I’m going to remain true to myself, no matter what. He vowed.
Shay clenched his fist. Ruri… Yuto and I will be there after the Synchro Dimension… I swear we’ll get you back! He thought back to what he just saw, where his best friend let Sylvio get his revenge.

Yuto… Don’t let your feelings get in the way of making decisions.
Yuto looked at his card. Soon, Ruri. I swear. I will bring you back with my own hands. I’ve done my best to follow your words; but it’s hard. I can’t always follow your philosophies, but one thing remains certain: dueling should never have been gone this far. It should never have been used as a weapon… Still, I can’t dwell on this… Unfortunately, to save you, I may have to go against what you’ve told me. There’s a time and place for everything, but I can’t always incorporate what you’ve told me to every situation. Maybe you could, but I can’t… I’m sorry. Yuto thought, thinking back to the Fusion duelists carding his people.
Sylvio put his dad’s card in his bag. I’m sorry dad, but I can’t avenge you… It just wasn’t right. I’ll still make you proud. I promise. He clutched his crystalized pendant. Please watch me…
Yuya swallowed nervously as he was given his card last. Am I really about to do this? What am I in for? He clutched his pendulum necklace. I have to do this. For my father, and for Yuzu…

51. Arrival

The episode starts with Reiji counting down from 10, and we get a shot of all the Lancers' faces before 0. Once he reaches 0, everyone activates the button on their screen and they all disappear into a purple light.

Within a few seconds, the Lancers appear in a pleasant park clearing. They look at their surroundings: they see a fancy, futuristic city in the distance and a big TV screen showing someone with blonde spiky hair. "Home sweet home!" Yugo declares. 'Or… Kinda.'

"What do you mean 'kinda'?" Gong asked. "Well, you see… In New Domino City, there are two distinct groups: 1% of the population are the topsiders, or the rich folk who can live their lives up there." Yugo points to a tall platform with huge skyscrapers on them. The buildings and lights are so pretty… Yuzu thinks. "However, 99% of the population are Commoners. They have the misfortune of living in poverty…" Yugo clenched his fist. "They treat the Commoners like trash. They force them into hard labor with no pay, and the authoritative figures always try their best to arrest or

even abuse us for no reason." Yugo explained. The Lancers were shocked to hear this. It's a shame that such a beautiful city is a dystopia… Yuzu thinks. "So, does that mean that we're all technically Commoners since we aren't from here?" Reiji asked. Yugo nodded. "I am, too. Anyone in this Dimension born rich is a Topsider. Everyone else is a Commoner."

"It would be in our best interest to find a base we can relocate to. Do you have any recommendations?" Reiji asked. "You can come to my place!" Yugo told them, leading the way.

At Yugo's house, the Lancers were surprised by how nice it looked. "How did you afford this?" Yuzu asked. 'I don't! Rin and I just found this place years ago and nobody was living here! We really hit the jackpot!' Yugo grinned. "How do you pay for the electricity and all this stuff?" Yuya asked, playing with the fancy water handles. "That's the best part! The Topsiders are so rich that they pay for all the housing stuff!" Yugo explained.

Sylvio opened the fridge, and was disappointed to see a lack of food. "All you have is milk, fruits, and cheap yogurt?" Sylvio asked. 'Hey! It may be cheap, but it tastes all the same!' Yugo scolded. Sylvio looked at the yogurt. "This is a week past its expiration date!" Sylvio yelled. Yugo scratched his

head. “Oh. I guess it has been a while since I’ve had to get food.”
Yuzu volunteered to go grocery shopping for all of them. “Alright, well… We have a tight budget.” Yugo admitted. ‘How much do you have?’ She asked. “Uh…” Yugo took out his wallet. It had nothing inside, except a fly that flew out. “Alright, I guess we’re gonna have to steal some food from the rich.” Yugo declared. “Steal?” Yuzu asked. “Why not? That’s always what I would do whenever Rin and I didn’t have money for things. There’s a Farmers Market nearby, if you still want to go there.” Yugo told her. Yuzu wasn’t sure if she wanted to go anymore, but Declan spoke up and said, “if this is what has to be done, then so be it. Yugo said himself that the Topsiders can always afford more things.” Reiji told her. “Isn’t this a crime?” Yuzu asked. “Pssh don’t worry about it! Since you don’t look like a Commoner, I doubt that the Topsiders will even be suspicious!” Yugo reassured her.
“I’ll go with Yuzu.” Serena declared. ‘Good! The Topsiders will be even less suspicious if two innocent looking girls go to the Farmers Market!’ Yugo declared. “Innocent looking?” Serena asked in annoyance. Yuzu quickly grabbed Serena’s hand and ran out. “We’ll be back!” She yelled. “Wait! I

haven’t given you directions!” Yugo yelled, but it was too late.
“What if Yuzu gets lost? Shouldn’t you do something?” Yuya asked. ‘Actually, all of your duel disks have a tracker on them, so I know where you’re all at. Likewise, those two know exactly where we are, so they can always trace the connection.’ Reiji said calmly. “Just relax, Yuya. Yuzu will be alright.” Gong told him. “There are plenty of places they can steal from, so I’m sure they’ll find something!” Yugo told them.
Meanwhile, Yuzu and Serena ran back to the park they used to be at. Serena seemed uncomfortable with Yuzu holding her hand, so she let go. “Oh, sorry about that!” Yuzu apologized. Serena didn’t acknowledge the apology. ‘Hey… I talked to Shay, and you were right… My life is a lie, so I’m a Lancer now.’ Serena awkwardly tried to apologize. Yuzu tried to tell Serena that it was for the best, but the Fusion user seemed to be out of it. “Hey! Since you were isolated for so many years, you never got to experience the fun stuff! How about from now on, I get you out of the house and show you what you’ve been missing?” Yuzu offered. Serena slowly nodded. “Yeah… I’d like that.” Yuzu hugged Serena playfully, which made her flinch. Unlike with Yuya though, she didn’t push Yuzu off. “Maybe I’ll teach

you some social cues, too!" Yuzu told her. Flustered by Yuzu's sudden energy, Serena tried to avoid her gaze. "Uhh, okay."

Back at the house, Reiji had ordered the remaining Lancers to clean up Yugo's house. He had taken Riley down into the basement and set up a lair. "How did you manage to bring a whole TV screen?" Gong asked. "That's none of your concern." Reiji coldly responded.

Everyone split up to do different chores. Yuto and Yugo were both sent to the garage to clean up. "Hey, are you still mad at me? Cause it feels like your presence has this intensity to it!" Yugo pointed out. Yuto narrowed his eyes at him, but didn't speak. 'Yoohoo! Hello?' Yugo asked. "You accused me of kidnapping your girlfriend on multiple occasions without hearing me out. Then you tried to kill me! And Yuya!" Yuto finally spoke up. "You can't just act like everything's cool between us now!" Yugo was taken aback by Yuto's outburst. "I told you that Yuri was the one who stole Rin! I think Yuzu mentioned that he took Ruri, too." Yugo informed. "I know." Yuto replied dryly. "You know… I'm sorry about trying to hurt you and Yuya. I was just desperate to see Rin. I would do anything to see my girl again… As would you." Yugo remarked. Yuto didn't respond to this. As much as I hate to admit it,

he’s right. Yuri took Ruri and Rin from us, and we’d do anything to get them back.
“Come onnnn, man! What will it take for you to stop being angry with me?” Yugo asked. ‘Maybe if you learned some manners! That would be a good step. Maybe don’t jump on innocent people who have done nothing to you!’ Yuto pointed out. “Y’know, Rin once said that I had a motormouth that needed a speed bump…” Yugo admitted. “She sounds like a reasonable person.” Yuto muttered.
“How about a duel? If I win, you have to like me! If I lose, you can hate me all you want!” Yugo challenged. Yuto knew deep down that holding a grudge against Yugo would do nothing, as he was a comrade now. We have an important thing in common: we both had our girlfriends taken by Duel Academy. We share a common enemy, and share the same loss. Still, he tried to kill Yuya and I, for god’s sake! Sure, it may have all been a misunderstanding, but an apology coming from this guy with his ‘chill bro’ attitude wasn’t going to erase that! Does he have any etiquette at all?
The episode ends with Yuto agreeing to the challenge, and they head outside to duel.

52. Burying the Hatchet

The episode begins with Reiji and Riley in the basement. They've somehow set up a whole dang lair with a big screen and everything, just like in the Leo Institute. Riley is seen hugging Reiji tightly in fear. "I know you're scared, Riley… But you have to do this. We have to stop our father's reign of terror." He tried to tell Riley. 'Why are you treating me so kindly?' They suddenly asked. Reiji was shocked by this. "What do you mean?" He asked.
"You treat me as if I'm human… Like I have emotions, or as if I care what's going on around me… As if I'm whole. Nobody else does that… So why do you do that?" Riley responded quietly. For a second, we see Reiji have a sympathetic expression on his face. 'That's easy. It's because you are human. Despite what mother tells you, you do have emotions. You may not have an identity yet, but I know you will.' He told the child. "What does that even mean?" Riley asked. Reiji crouched to Riley's level. "Let's start off easy. How would you like me to address you?" Riley thought about it for a second. "I don't feel like I belong in this body." They responded. "What do you feel like, then?" Reiji

asked. “I want to be like Yuzu and Serena.” They confessed. Reiji nodded. “Very well, then.”
Meanwhile, Serena and Yuzu somehow managed to make it to the Farmers Market. They agree to split up and find fruits, vegetables, canned goods, and crackers.
Yuto and Yugo continue their duel. This duel lasts most of the episode.
Serena is seen by a Topsider who calls the police, which prompts her and Yuzu to run. They have collected plenty of food, though.
The scene cuts to a Hamilton-esque looking man with a chess board. “Sir, two girls have been spotted stealing food from the local market.” A lady reports. It is implied that this man runs Sector Security. He sends the police after them.
The two manage to get back to the house with food. “That was more fun than I thought.” Yuzu admitted. Serena nodded. The Lancers were excited to see them with food. “By the way, why are Yuto and Yugo dueling outside?” Yuzu asked. The Lancers decided to head outside.
The duel goes on for a bit, and then Yugo barely wins. “Ohhh yeah! I finally won!” He declares. Yuto dipped his head politely. ‘I apologize for how I acted.’ He told Yugo. Even though there was a part of him that thought it was ridiculous that Yugo could

get away with attempted murder, he knew holding onto a grudge wouldn't help anything. Plus, Yuto was an honorable person, and he had to keep up his end of the deal: he had to treat Yugo with kindness. Yugo smiled. "Thanks!" Yugo exclaimed, and he put his arm around Yuto's neck. This made him flinch instinctively, but he didn't move. "Now that we're even, we can talk about our girlfriends together!" Yuto gave Yugo a weirded out look, but that just made him grin. He's so idiotic… But maybe his energy and enthusiasm is what the Lancers need. Maybe he'll grow on me…

53. Faculty's Universal CrooKs: The Police

The episode begins with the Lancers gathered around the kitchen table. It is implied that a day has passed since the previous episode. “Now that we have settled, I think it would be in our best interests to make ourselves publicly known among the Commoners. Not only to recruit members, but also to spread the word of the interdimensional war… As I believe that this dimension has not been invaded yet, correct?” Reiji turned to Yugo. ‘Yeah no. I’ve never seen any outsiders come into this dimension before.’ Yugo said. “What would be the best way to make ourselves known to the Commoners?” Reiji asked. “I guess just hang around shelters?” Yugo said, clearly unsure. “Shouldn’t you know how this works?” Sylvio accused. “Well, I’ve never had to do something like this!” Yugo argued back. Reiji silenced them. “Fine. We’ll do as Yugo says. Take us to the nearest shelter.” Reiji said. “About that…” Yugo began. Serena rolled her eyes. “Idiot.” She muttered. “Hey! I heard that! That hurts coming from someone who looks like Rin!” He yelled. “Besides, I’m sure if we split up we’ll find one.”

Unfortunately, once the Lancers went outside, they found themselves surrounded by Sector Security. “Freeze! You are all under arrest!” One of the cops shouts. ‘What did we do?’ Gong asked. “Our sources say that you are hiding fugitives who have committed theft at a local Farmers Market.” He responded. The cops point to Yuzu and Serena. “Why didn’t you warn them about the police before sending them off?” Gong asked Yugo. “I thought they would be fine!” He insisted.

“Hey! You can’t arrest us! I am the son of a former candidate for mayor, and you can’t arrest his son’s group!” Sylvio yelled. Gong shot Sylvio a glare that basically meant ‘shut up and let us handle this.’

Serena stood protectively in front of Yuzu, activating her duel disk. “Serena, wait! We should talk this out with them first!” Yuzu protests. “They know we stole food, so why bother?” Serena replies. Great, she just admitted it out loud! Yuzu thought in exasperation.

Shay activates his duel disk as well, prompting Yuto to try and grab his arm. “Don’t engage yet!” Yuto warned him.

Unfortunately, it was too late to negotiate with the officers, as Serena, Sylvio, and Shay’s impulsiveness has triggered them into activating their duel disks. “Great.” Gong gritted his teeth. The

remaining Lancers had no choice but to activate their duel disks and fight back. The officers approach each Lancer to duel them.
The majority of the episode is spent watching all the Lancers duel. The scene changes every minute to a different Lancer.
Dennis is trying to entertain the police officers, who react negatively to this.
Yuya is the only Lancer trying to reason with the officers, and insists that they did nothing wrong.
I’m gonna show you a montage of each Lancer summoning their monster:
Yuya: “Swing far, Pendulum! Carve the arc of victory! My monsters are ready to swing into action! Turn up the heat, Odd-Eyes Pendulum Dragon!”
Yuzu: “I activate the spell card, Polymerization! I fuse Aria the Melodious Diva and Crystal Rose! Angel’s song, supreme genius! With the guidance of the baton, gather your power! I fusion summon! Come to the stage, Bloom Diva the Melodious Choir!”
Gong: “I sacrifice the two Superheavy Samurai Prepped Defenses on my field to summon an even tougher monster! Give rise to Superheavy Samurai Big Benkei!”
Sylvio: “Do you feel a chill in the air? Because I do! And that chill’s gonna go right down your spine

once you see this monster! Rise, Mobius the Frost Monarch!”
Yuto: “I overlay my 2 level 4 Phantom Knights of Shadow Veil! Cloaked in shadows and relentless in its objective, I call upon the most dangerous of dragons! I XYZ Summon! Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon!”
Shay: “I overlay my 3 Vanishing Laniuses! From the shadows, the falcon soars on wings of courage, talons ready for the rebellion! I XYZ Summon! Raidraptor Rise Falcon!”
Reiji: “Hellhound that bares its fangs, vamp of the dark night! In a whirlpool of light from the realm of the dead, become one and give birth to a new king. Fusion Summon! Be born! D/D/D Flame King Genghis!” —> ‘Now behold as a new power emerges, cutting through the darkness like a blade of lightning to begin his reign! I Synchro Summon! D/D/D Gust King Alexander!’—-> “Prepare to meet a trio of sovereign warriors, because there’s a third king on the way! I promise you have never faced a warrior king as magnificent or commanding as this one! I XYZ Summon D/D/D Wave King Caesar!”
Yugo: “Beat your wings to whip up a whirlwind of destruction! I Synchro Summon! Clear Wing Synchro Dragon!”
Riley: “Iron Cannon! Dwell in this eye and give me

your power! Fusion Summon! Level 6! C/C/C Rock Sword the Embodiment of Fused Arms!”
Serena: “I fuse Lunalight Blue Cat and Lunalight Purple Butterfly! Blue cat that prowls through the darkness! Butterfly with violet poison! Spiral into the moon’s gravity and become a new power! Fusion Summon! Come to me! Beautiful beast that dances in the moonlight! Lunalight Cat Dancer!”
Dennis: “Now for my next trick, here’s a Summon that you have probably never seen before! I Xyz Summon! Prepare to face the acrobatic atrocities of my Rank 4 Performage Trapeze Magiciaaaaaan!”
Despite all of their best efforts, they are still cornered. “I think we should retreat!” Yuya yells out nervously. “No way! We’ve committed to a fight, so we’re gonna finish it!” Serena yelled at him. Serena and Shay use their respective ace monsters to decimate multiple officers’ fields and defeat them in one turn. (Interestingly, both ace monsters involve attacking multiple times and gaining attack points)
Reiji made sure to protect Riley, and the other Lancers got in front of Riley as well. They formed a protective semicircle around them.
Suddenly, they all hear the sound of a motorcycle revving. The Lancers look around to see where the noise is coming from. Yuto and Shay are the first to notice the sky turning dark. Shay gets a flashback of

the Ancient Gear Monsters turning Heartland's sky black due to smoke and pollution. He grits his teeth and viciously attacks with Rise Falcon. Suddenly, they hear a voice say, "spread your jet black wings and storm forth in a tandem with the roaring thunder! Slash apart the lightning! Synchro Summon! Cascade! Assault Blackwing, Raikiri the Rain Shower!" Raikiri swoops past the officers, while mysterious figures on motorcycles race toward the cornered Lancers. "Hurry! Get on!" A boy with orange hair yells at the Lancers. They all get on a different motorcycle, and speed off.

The episode ends with the Hamilton man standing up in anger. This causes his desk to shake, and the camera zooms in on the man's name tag on the desk: Jean-Michel Roget. They won't get away next time! Roget thinks.

54. Conflicting Ternary (turn-a-ree)

The episode begins with the Lancers and the mysterious gang of motorcycles arriving at a house. The Lancers get off. The leader, the one who summoned Raikiri, says something to the members, and they take off. “Who are you?” Yuya asks the orange haired duelist. He introduces himself as Crow Hogan, a Commoner who takes care of orphaned kids. ‘Why did you help us?’ Sylvio asked. “I always help fellow Commoners in need… Teamwork is the only way us Commoners can achieve great things.” Crow responds. “Does that mean you’re our ally?” Sylvio asked. “Of course. After all, you guys protected a child from Sector Security, so I know I can trust you all.” Crow said, smiling at Sylvio. Sylvio stared at Crow in awe. Wow… This guy’s really something!

Crow gestures to them to come inside. As soon as they enter, they are greeted by the kids Crow takes care of. Jeez! It looks like there’s about 20 kids! How can Crow take care of everyone by himself? Yuzu wondered.

“If you’re all hungry, I can make you a meal.” Crow

offered. Reiji, Yuto, Yuzu, and Gong started to deny it out of politeness, but everyone else agreed to it. Sylvio's stomach grumbled the loudest of all, resulting in an awkward silence. "No, no, it's fine! You all better be prepared for the meal I'm gonna make you!" Crow reassured them. He caught Sylvio's eye again, and smiled again. Sylvio felt a little embarrassed after that.

Once the food was done, everyone dug in. Comedically, Yuto, Yuzu, Reiji, Riley, and Gong were very well-mannered at the table, but everyone else wasn't. In my mind, I imagine this scene playing out something like this: Yuzu has her napkin folded, is cutting her food into bite size pieces, and is slowly eating with her mouth closed. Then we cut to Yuya, who is shoveling food in his mouth, eating with his hands, and making a mess. We then cut to Gong, who is delicately cutting his food which sharply contrasts how you'd think he'd eat. We then cut to Sylvio who is eating everything in one bite and chewing with his mouth open. We cut to Yuto who is organizing the food on his plate, picking up his food with his utensils carefully, and eating quietly. We then cut to Shay who is smacking his lips and chewing unbearably loud, while stabbing his food. We cut to Reiji who is eating slowly and robotically, but still in a well-mannered way. We

then cut to Serena, who is eating just as ferally as Shay, but unlike him she was never taught table manners. We cut to Riley who is robotically eating just like Reiji, and is chewing slowly. We then cut to Dennis eating as if he were racing. We cut to Crow and the kids, eating with the utmost manners and eating at a reasonable speed. Lastly, we cut to Yugo eating ferally and doing every possible thing you're not supposed to do at a dinner table.

Interestingly, after seeing how well-mannered Crow and the kids were while eating, Sylvio makes a bit more of an effort to eat slowly. No one else does this.

After Crow finished eating, he began to talk. "Sorry for ignoring you all, I just like to talk after eating." He admitted. 'Oh no, I totally get it! I do too!' Sylvio agreed. "So, what's your all's story? Where you all from?" Crow asked. Yuya tries to speak for the group, but Sylvio interrupts him by putting a hand over his mouth and using his other hand to shake Crow's hand. "Thank you for saving us! As for the question, we've come from different dimensions to stop Duel Academy from invading!" Sylvio told him. Crow gave him a look of confusion. Reiji decided to take over from there, and explained to Crow about how they were a group trying to stop Duel Academy from spreading the interdimensional

war to the Synchro Dimension. “They’ve already laid waste to the XYZ Dimension… These two can attest to that.” Reiji pointed out, gesturing toward Yuto and Shay, who looked away out of discomfort. ‘Duel Academy has begun invading my home dimension, so it is only a matter of time before they start coming here. To prevent that, we had hoped that we could recruit members from this dimension to join our group and take down Duel Academy.’ Reiji explained. “Well, you can count me in. I don’t know about a lot of what you’re saying, but I sure as heck don’t want an interdimensional war to threaten this dimension!” Crow declared.

Suddenly, a voice cuts in and says, “Crow, why are you agreeing to something so readily? Their issues can be put to the side, we have our duties here.” Everyone turns to see a tall man with purple and blue hair enter the kitchen. He seems to be grasping a child in his hand. ‘What are you doing to him, Shinji?’ Crow asks with a sudden edge to his voice. “Tarren did it to himself! I caught him sneaking back with food that he had stolen, isn’t that right?” Tarren started to cry and admitted that he did it. “Fool. You know how dangerous that was? You could’ve been arrested, or worse. You could’ve got us all caught! Everything Crow and I have worked for would all crumble thanks to your selfish need!”

Shinji scolded. Serena and Yuzu exchanged an awkward glance. “Shinji! Don’t be so harsh!” Crow yelled at him. “He needs to learn his lesson!” Shinji retorted, and slapped the child in the face. Everyone gasped. Crow forcefully pinned Shinji to the wall, letting Tarren escape. “I know you’re still mad at me, but we agreed to leave the kids out of this.” Crow said in a low voice. Shinji scoffed. “Whatever. What gives you the right to lecture me on how to parent? You were about to agree to some strange deal with outsiders and leave us behind!” He pointed out.

“We’re standing right here, y’know!” Sylvio yelled at Shinji. This made the two stop arguing. Shinji pushed Crow off of him, and walked towards Sylvio. ‘You think you can butt into our business, rich boy?’ Shinji threatened, cracking his knuckles. This frightened Sylvio, but he didn’t back down. “Leave him alone, Shinji.” Crow said, grabbing Shinji by the arm. He pulled away from Crow forcefully, and turned around. Shinji let out a “tch” and walked away, muttering, “you’re insane.”

Sylvio seemed to notice Crow’s anger-filled expression turned to sorrow. “What just happened?” Sylvio asked him quietly. Crow looked away. ‘That was Shinji. He’s the other caretaker here… “He replied in a low voice.” Why was he so upset?’

Sylvio asked. Crow closed his eyes. “Because I broke his heart.”

55. Origins: Crow Hogan Part 1

The episode begins with a five year old Crow Hogan having to be abandoned by his parents. It is implied that his family can’t support a child financially and they leave him in an alleyway. “Mom! Dad! Wait!” He cried out.

As Crow walked the streets of a park, he was chased out by some Topsiders who yelled at him. He was mercilessly ridiculed for being on their territory. “Commoner filth! Get out of here!” A man in a suit yelled at the young boy, slapping him in the face.

A young Crow is forced to sleep in an abandoned alleyway near a dumpster, where the occasional trash was thrown on his head. He looked up to see a skyscraper with people partying on it.

Hungry and depressed, Crow was eventually taken in by some kind old ladies. The house he lives in isn’t nearly as nice as Crow’s present day home, as it is implied that the ladies are barely holding things together. There are also only five kids.

The only thing Crow had brought with him after being abandoned by his parents was a Blackwing card. He aspired to be a duelist, after seeing how a

fellow Commoner named Jack Atlas managed to become famous for his duels and live in wealth. Many Commoners looked up to him, as he became a symbol of hope for them. Crow would constantly hear people talk about how his rise to fame would inspire social change in the Synchro Dimension's classist society. I'm gonna live in the city one day, and I'll be just like Jack!

Crow, along with the other five kids, trained to become duelists. They had high hopes of becoming famous through their dueling like Jack did so that they could become rich and help others.

Crow likes to hang out with Shinji the most, as Shinji is the most determined out of all of them. Shinji always hyped them up, and was the most assertive in his voice for justice. However, he tended to have emotional outbursts a lot that always made the house feel like it was shaking. They were so bad that the caregivers disowned him and called him "insane" and "bipolar."

A few scenes go by where Crow is trying to comfort Shinji after his meltdowns, and whenever he is scolded by the caregivers for acting insane.

When Crow is 10, he overhears Shinji having another meltdown and arguing with his caretakers. He runs away, and Crow chases after him. He stops Shinji from causing the police from finding him.

“You can’t cause a ruckus! You’ll get us all arrested!” He insisted. ‘Why do things have to be this way? It’s not fair!’ Shinji yelled out. Crow couldn’t say anything to comfort his friend, as he knew that that would change their circumstances. “I’m going to be like Jack one day.” Shinji swore through gritted teeth. “The Topsiders won’t look down on us anymore!”

A time skip occurs, where Crow and Shinji are 14. Due to the laws of New Domino City, they are forced to leave the orphanage behind. This upsets Crow and Shinji, as they both grew up around kids of all ages and have a soft spot for children.

They walk around to look for shelter, but they can’t find any. They settle in an alleyway together, where they both sit against the wall next to each other. “Once we find a place to live, we’ll invite all the homeless kids we can find to live there, so they’ll be able to group up like we did. Then, we’ll make enough to enter the Friendship Cup, where we’ll win and gain the fame we’ve always wanted. If we keep winning, we can inspire hope in others, and make enough to help other people make a living.” Shinji told Crow. Crow agreed to this. Shinji pointed up at a star. ‘Just look at the view.’ Crow nodded. “It’s beautiful.” He agreed. “We wished upon a star… That means our dreams have to come true!” Shinji

exclaimed. Crow smiled. “Are we so desperate that we have to resort to superstitions?” He teased, lying his body comfortably against Shinji. “Shut up.” Shinji retorted, smiling. Crow rested his head on Shinji’s shoulder and closed his eyes. “Well, I guess that wish is all we have right now.” Crow admitted.
The episode ends with the camera zoomed out to show how Crow and Shinji are basically cuddling with each other under the night sky.

56. Origins: Crow Hogan Part 2

The episode begins with Crow and Shinji building their motorcycles together, as it is implied that they have somehow scraped enough money for parts. They also appear to have the house that they currently live in. “This baby’s almost done! How’s yours coming along?” He asked. ‘Pretty good.’ Crow replied. He was lying on his back fixing the tire. Shinji walked over to watch Crow fixing the tire, and whistled. “What was that for?” Crow asked, his face red. Shinji couldn’t see that Crow was blushing due to being under the motorcycle, and he was grateful for that. “What? I’m enjoying the view.” Shinji remarked. “Am I too distracting?” Crow shot back. “Actually, yes.” Shinji admitted.

In the next scene, we see that the two seem to have a few kids under their wing. They seem to be well adjusted to taking care of children, as they grew up around kids themselves. Plus, they’re so in sync with each other and the kids notice something too… “Thanks for cooking, Crow and Shinji!” One of the kids says. ‘It’s nothing!’ Crow smiles at them. “You two are like my new parents!” One of them remarks.

“That’s what we’re here for!” Shinji replies. “Are you two married? You remind me a lot of my old parents.” Another kid interjects. “M… Married?” Crow asks, getting flustered. “I mean, why else would you two own a house together and be like our parents?” The kid asks. “Y’know, the kid’s got a point…” Shinji smiles at Crow. “Oh, wouldn’t you like to know?” Crow retorts, lightly punching Shinji’s shoulder. The two play fight with each other for a bit.

Later, Crow and Shinji are seen tucking the kids in for the night. After they fall asleep, Crow says, “hey, can I talk to you for a second?” Shinji nods. ‘With pleasure.’ This makes Crow blush. They walk to the couch. “Hey… So, umm…” Crow tries to say. “Go on…” Shinji encourages, as he puts a hand on Crow’s hand. “Well, we’ve always been the type of friends who flirt, right? But… What does this mean to you? Are you actually being serious? Because I want…” Crow begins. “You want me?” Shinji asks with a smirk. “Well…” Crow tries to say, but is interrupted again. “I want you, too.” Shinji admits. Crow is rendered speechless by this. He doesn’t have to say anything, because Shinji kisses him, and Crow doesn’t move an inch.

Another time skip occurs, where Crow and Shinji are now both 16. It is implied that they are both

dating.
One night, Shinji comes home angry. He explains to Crow how a Topsider assaulted him, and went on a whole speech about how much he hates them. “I fought back. I hurt them, just as bad as they hurt me.” Shinji said in a low voice, showing a long, bloody scar on his arm. Crow’s eyes widened. ‘You did the same to them?’ He asked. “So what? They deserve it!” Shinji immediately said angrily. “Calm down! It’s just a question!” Crow responded. Shinji settled down, and Crow wrapped his arm in bandages.
In a new scene, we see Shinji and Crow arguing. “Why did you attack them?” Crow accused. ‘They were Topsiders! They would report me to the police if I didn’t!’ Shinji retorted. “If you hadn’t attacked them, they would be less likely to!” Crow yelled. “They’re Topsiders, Crow! They’re all the same!” Why is Shinji like this? We’ve had this argument a million times, so why won’t he listen? The house shook from the tension, and the kids were seen watching from a distance crying. It is implied in this scene that Shinji is attacking Topsiders of any kind, whether they’re hurting him or not. He is starting to go too far, and the two are arguing more frequently, which is stressing out the kids.
Later that day, Shinji is seen on the couch with

Crow. “Hey, I’m sorry for getting so mad at you earlier today… I was angry at the Topsiders, not you.” He tried to reassure him. ‘You know that isn’t the problem. When will you learn to stop being so reckless?’ Crow asked. “You’re right. I promise I’ll make things up to you.” Shinji said. “How would…” Crow tried to ask, but he was silenced by a kiss. The kiss quickly turned into something more; something that the kids decided to stop watching as it was getting too gross to watch.

After this, we get a scene of Crow alone in his bedroom deep in thought. Why did Shinji have to do that? Why can’t he listen to me for once? Why is he acting like I’m the problem? Crow heard footsteps down the hall. He’s probably come back from attacking random people. I wouldn’t be surprised if he harmed one of his own. He promised he’d stop, and we kissed… But then it’s all the same. Crow listened to Shinji’s footsteps, and heard the slamming of a door, which made him flinch. He’s probably mad at me…

Crow opened his door and tried to put an ear to Shinji’s door, but he couldn’t hear anything. How can I be honest with him if he keeps lying to me? These scenes are meant to show how manipulative and abusive Shinji is to Crow, and how this is starting to have negative effects on his mental

health. Crow seems to be in a state of paranoia, and is even developing mild trust issues.
Unfortunately, a small time skip occurs and we see Crow racing to save one of their kids from getting crushed to death. (From a collapsing building) He barely makes it in time, and saves the kid. Crow turns to see Shinji dueling a random Topsider, not even caring that one of their kids almost got killed because of him. This makes Crow angry, and he tells the kid to go back home as he confronts Shinji.
Once the Topsider is defeated, Shinji attempts to beat him to death, but Crow stops him. This allows the Topsider to escape. “What the heck are you doing?” Shinji asks angrily. ‘What the heck are you doing? Your negligence and ignorance almost got one of our kids killed!’ Crow accused him. “You were here, weren’t you?” Shinji dryly responds. “It isn’t just my responsibility! Was getting revenge on a random Topsider more important to you than your family?” Crow asked, a hint of sorrow in his voice. “Of course not… But revolution against the Topsiders is a cause that requires drastic measures. It’s something that will require sacrifices.” Shinji retorted. “Why are you doing this to me? I’ve asked you several times but you keep lying to me, and then you try to make me change my mind the next day by showering me with affection! But ultimately, you

don’t mean any of it. You always go back to your violent ways. You really are insane.” Crow yelled at him. This triggered Shinji. “I’m not insane! Stop telling me that!” He shouted, grabbing Crow by the collar. “Then stop toying with my feelings!” Crow snapped. “You know that it’s my dream to unite the Commons and get revenge! We agreed to it!” Shinji bit back.

“I know! But it seems like this dream of yours is more important than me.” Crow responded sadly. ‘You know that isn’t true!’ Shinji yelled. “No. I’m done with your excuses… Your lies, manipulation, faking… We’re done!” Crow yelled back. Shinji stared at his lover in shock. “Jerk! Do you have any idea what mistake you’re making?” He said, shaking Crow. “It’s a decision I should’ve made a long time ago.” Crow admitted. “I thought we had something… But I guess I was wrong! I’ll never forgive you!” Shinji snapped. He released Crow from his hold and ran off, presumably to hurt more people.

In another short time skip, we see Crow crying in his bedroom on the floor. He sees an indentation where Shinji used to lay, and immediately evens the mattress out to get rid of it. The kids can tell Crow and Shinji are both upset about their break up, and are coping in different ways.

The episode ends with the two finally speaking to each other after a week of Shinji giving Crow the silent treatment. “Shinji… Please don’t tell the kids about us. We have to act tolerant of each other, at least for their sakes. We can’t be arguing in front of them, or else they’ll get scared. Please… It’s all I ask of you.” Crow begged. ‘Fine, whatever. I’ll do it for the kids.’ Shinji replied. “Thank you.” Crow said, relief washing through him. “Shut up. I’ll never forgive you.” Shinji responded, and locked himself in his room and slammed the door; leaving Crow standing outside.

57. Division

The episode begins with the Lancers still in Crow's kitchen. They seem to all understand that Crow and Shinji are ex lovers, and that Shinji is still bitter about it. Crow offers them a place to stay, considering that Yugo's house is probably under Sector Security's radar.

A few hours later, it's dinnertime, and Crow is calling the Lancers back to the house. Some of them had gone out to look for members and spread the word about the interdimensional war. Reiji had since given Crow a duel disk with a tracker and an internal phone. "Dinner's ready when y'all get back." Crow called them. Yuya and Riley were the only people left at the house at the time.

Shinji is seen coming back and offering the kids some junk food. He pours it all out on the table, which makes Crow mad as he made dinner and he doesn't want them to fill up on junk. It is also heavily implied that Shinji stole this food, which just shows that he is a massive hypocrite. "You stole that, didn't you?" Crow asked. 'No I didn't! Who do you think you are, accusing me of something?' Shinji complained back. "Whatever. You make

everything into a fight. It's exhausting." Crow admitted, and Shinji turned away.
Crow calls over to Riley to come and get ready to eat, but Riley doesn't budge. "Is that an order?" Riley responds robotically. Crow laughs, as he is surprised by how Riley is treating this as if this was some military business. "If that'll make you feel better, then yeah. It is." Crow tells her. Riley gets up to go wash her hands.
'Why is that kid always so robotic?' Crow wonders. "I don't know." Yuya admits. "Well, at least she follows orders. I won't have to worry about her getting into as much trouble as my youngins." Crow reassures him. "I kind of wish Riley didn't focus so much on following orders. I wish she could just sit back and enjoy life a little… I want to bring a smile to her face. Not just hers, but to all the dimensions." Yuya admits.
"That's a nice thought, but happiness around here is a full stomach." Crow responds with a hint of annoyance in his voice. This makes Yuya angry, as he saw Crow's comment as an insult to his father's beliefs. 'Is that really all that matters to you? Food? Smiles represent happiness! Don't you want your kids to be happy?' He accused. This low blow from Yuya triggered Crow. "What do you know about raising kids? You're practically still a child, what

with your naive outlook.” Crow snapped. “It doesn’t matter how much food you have; if you’re not smiling, then you aren’t happy. You’re just lonely!” Yuya yelled. “Do you hear yourself right now? Food is what keeps you going! Just taking a bite into something good makes you happy! Food is the essence of life. Survival always comes first over anything else!” Crow yelled back.

Yuya doesn’t speak for a few seconds, which makes Crow apologize. “I’m sorry for yelling at you, but… Your beliefs reflect where you came from. You clearly grew up well-off. You need to understand that not everyone is like you.” Crow told him. ‘Maybe you need to understand what happiness feels like.’ Yuya snarkily responded. “I know what that’s like!” Crow shouted. “Really? Because I find it sad that your highlight of the day is eating!” Yuya retorted.

Crow’s kids and Riley get back from washing their hands, only to walk in on Crow and Yuya’s argument devolving into them yelling “food” and ‘smiles’ over and over. “Fine! If you won’t understand, then I’ll have to duel you and show you why my father’s beliefs are correct!” Yuya yelled. Crow agreed, and they headed outside.

Meanwhile, we see Serena and Yuzu together heading back. Serena looks up at a poster of Jack

Atlas that has been vandalized. Strange. The posters of this guy in the Topsiders part of the city are much more positive. I wonder why this is vandalized, if he's such an idol?

As Yuya takes his turn, he yells, "ladies, gentlemen, and people in-between!" He is addressing the crowd of kids who have come to watch, and is trying to entertain them. 'Are you trying to turn my kids against me with your pathetic attempts at entertainment?' Crow asked. "It's not pathetic! Dueltaining is how people back home bring smiles!" Yuya retorts. Crow rolls his eyes.

Sylvio is the first Lacner to arrive, and he is surprised to see Crow and Yuya dueling. He overhears them arguing about food vs smiles again. "Whoooo! Let's go, Crow!" Sylvio yells out. 'Hey! Why are you rooting for him? You've known me longer!' Yuya yells at Sylvio. "Sorry Yuya, but Crow's got a point. Food is the essence of life! Besides, what gives you the right to spread your beliefs onto Crow?" Sylvio defended. Crow smiled and gave Sylvio a thumbs up. "See, even your buddy here agrees with me!" He exclaimed. "I'm gonna have to treat you to my best dish later!" Crow promises Sylvio. This takes him off guard, and he nervously responds, "ooh, yeah. I'd like that" in a more toned down voice than we are used to hearing.

“What do you mean, spreading my beliefs?” Yuya asks. ‘Well… Your dueltaining and philosophy feels a little… How should I put it… Fake?’ Sylvio remarks. “What?” Yuya asks. “Don’t get me wrong, I respect you as a duelist, but it doesn’t really feel like you’re being honest! I don’t think being known as the guy who smiles no matter what is a good look… It sometimes isn’t appropriate. Besides, dueltaining should be about being honest with yourself and enjoying yourself, not bearing the burden of making sure everyone else is having fun! Then again, I don’t have to worry because I know the audience has fun when they are blessed in my presence! Sylvio comments.

Before Yuya can argue with Sylvio, he sees the rest of the Lancers arriving for dinner. “What gives? I’m hungry!” Yugo demands. ‘Blame Yuya, he’s the one who’s making you all wait!’ Crow accuses. Yugo immediately turns on Yuya. “I’m trying to teach Crow that my father’s philosophies are worth more than some cheap food!” He told them. “Yuya, you know we’re standing here starving… Right?” Gong asked.

At the mention of Yuya’s father, Shay was triggered. “Enough about Yusho! That coward abandoned my people when we needed him most! His beliefs just made us weaker, and less prepared for the invasion!”

Shay suddenly yelled out. ‘My father was in the XYZ Dimension? When?’ Yuya asked. Shay didn’t answer that, and went up to Yuya. “Shut up! Stop spreading Yusho’s lies!” Shay yelled, and acted like he was about to punch Yuya.
Reiji and Yuto grabbed Shay’s arms, preventing him from hurting Yuya. “Remember your sister everytime you’re about to do something stupid.” Reiji whispered. Shay scoffed and walked off. What does Shay know about my dad? What gives him the right to talk? He’s never happy! Yuya thinks.
‘This whole duel is getting ridiculous. Just surrender and let us eat already.’ Serena remarked. “Yuya… Now isn’t the time for this.” Gong tried to gently push. “No, I think he should continue!” Dennis said, which prompted all the Lancers to give Dennis an angered/annoyed look. He stopped talking immediately and hid in the corner. “You’re all soooo mean!”
“Yuya, do you know how much harm you’re causing by spreading his lies?” Reiji asked. ‘What do you all have against him?’ Yuya asked. “I’m just worried about the effect your father’s legacy has on you.” Gong pipes in. “He’s a manipulative, fake man. You’re just as bad as him for buying into his act.” Shay curtly says. This scene is interesting, as pretty much every Lancer is siding against Yuya right now,

albeit for different reasons. While Gong and Yuzu are the only ones against Yuya for the fact that they're worried about how his father's abandonment has affected him, everyone else is against Yuya due to either being hungry and impatient, or because they had a bad experience with Yusho.

Unfortunately, before they can continue, everyone hears Shinji's voice coming toward them. He races up to them on his motorcycle, implying that he was out doing something the whole time. "Sector Security is coming!" He yells. This shocks everyone. "I thought this place was supposed to be well-hidden?" Yuya accused.

Suddenly, a net is thrown at Yuya, which makes him fall to the ground and start screaming. Crow is stunned for a second, but spots a net being thrown at Sylvio, and runs in to protect him. He doesn't make it in time, and both he and Sylvio are caught in the net together. Lying on top of Sylvio in an awkward position, Crow tries to apologize and move, but he can't. Sylvio is notably blushing, and says, "oh no! It's fine! This is totally okay… It isn't awkward at all!" Sylvio is very obviously flustered, and Crow finally notices how awkward this position is.

Shinji turns to see Sylvio trapped in a net with Crow, who is accidentally in a weirdly suggestive position. "What the $#&% are you doing?" Shinji screamed at

Crow, before being thrown to the ground by the police.

The police tackle the remaining Lancers. Shay is the last one left standing as he is still fighting back. An officer tases him in the back, which knocks him out and he collapses. The police handcuff everyone, and pull a truck up. “Alright everyone, get in! You’re all under arrest!” They yell.

58. Confinement

The episode begins exactly how it left off. The police escort the Lancers into the back of a large van. However, some Lancers are still fighting back; and because of this, the officers have to forcefully throw them in.

“Hey! Unhand us! Wait until my dimension hears that you arrested the former candidate for mayor’s son!” Sylvio shouts at them. “Shut up!” The officers say, as they throw a netted Sylvio and Crow in. Sylvio has the misfortune of being thrown face first into the back of the van, with Crow crushing him as they are tangled in a net together. Unfortunately for both of them, Shinji is then thrown in toward them in an awkward position, so his butt hits Sylvio in the face and his back clobbers into Crow’s head, almost giving him a concussion. Due to the force of Shinji’s weight, Sylvio is slammed into the wall AGAIN, making him see stars for a few seconds.

“Get off of me!” Crow demands, and it takes Shinji a few seconds to realize that he’s been thrown on top of his ex.

Comedically, the policemen can’t throw Gong in due to his massive height and size, so they have to force

him in. Also, funny enough, unlike literally everybody else who is fighting with the policemen to escape, Reiji and Riley calmly step in the van. Yuto protests at first, but gives up when he sees a tased Shay and willingly walks into the van.
When everyone is loaded, the officers get ready to close the doors. Crow yells at the kids to “eat healthily and take care of yourselves” and promises that he’ll be back. The kids cry as the officers get in the front of the van and start to drive. At least they didn’t arrest the kids… Crow thinks.
Soon after, arguments resume. “Why the %$*# are you two like this?” Shinji demands, pointing at Crow and Sylvio being in an AWKWARD position. ‘We were trapped like this!’ Sylvio protests. “Why are you blaming us? You probably lured Sector Security here. I saw that you left by yourself!” Crow accused. “Well, if you hadn’t been dueling and yelling at this tomato-head, then maybe Sector Security wouldn’t have noticed!” Shinji said, shifting the blame onto Yuya. “Tomato-head?” Yuya asked in anger. “Shut up! I’ve heard enough of you for today! You’re just Yusho’s mouthpiece!” Shay yelled, waking up from being tased. “Thanks to you, I’m not getting any food!” Yugo yelled at Yuya.
“Quiet!” Reiji shouted, making them all shut up. Yuya and Crow notice that Riley is shaking in fear,

which makes them feel bad. ‘If we’re divided like this, then we’re never going to make it to Duel Academy! Please put your personal issues aside, and just focus on our mission: stopping Duel Academy.’ He scolded them. “Easy for you to say!” Shinji yelled, but immediately stopped when he saw Riley staring at him. “Just look! You’ve upset HER!” Reiji scolds Shinji. This silences Shinji.

“Crow… Where are we headed?” Yuzu asks. “There’s only one place we could be headed to: the Facility.” Crow answers.

The scene changes to Roget. “The fugitives have been taken into custody and are heading to the Facility right now.” The woman reports. “Good. Now make sure that the two similar looking girls are put in a special confinement.” Roget orders.

Meanwhile, there’s an uncomfortable silence. Everybody can feel a sense of impending doom, despite not knowing what the Facility is. The camera pans on everyone’s faces, as they all look angry/sad. Gong and Yuto look particularly upset. Gong is upset because he’s worried about Yuya, and Yuto is depressed because he feels like his objective to reach Duel Academy keeps getting further and further from his reach. These past few days have felt like slow anticipation for him, and he’s had to be subjected to constant arguing. Ruri… Yuto thinks

about his girlfriend while crossing his arms over his shoulders. The camera gives a top-view on the seat he's sitting in, and a drop of water hits it. We then see a random, speed-up montage of Ruri smiling, which just punches you in the gut.
When the van arrives, two guards escort the Lancers out. "You two will be put in special confinement." They point at Serena and Yuzu. 'What?' Yuya gasps, trying to wriggle free of a guard's hold on him. "Yuzu!" He cries out. "Don't make a scene!" Serena hissed at him, as the two were taken away. The guard explains that their duel disks will be confiscated as dueling is not allowed, but they can keep their decks. "Why?" Crow asks. "Your cards are worth your life around here. You'd better enjoy having a full deck while you can. Now… Enjoy your new lives in the gathering place of scum." The guard tells them, escorting them inside.
The Lancers are split up: Reiji is taken to a cell with Riley, Sylvio and Crow are forced to be in a cell together, Yuya and Gong are put in a cell together, and Yuto, Yugo, Shinji, and Dennis are put in individual cells. Shay is still seen putting up a fight, so the police officers tase him again. "Yeah no, this one's going to solitary confinement immediately." One of the guards says, and another guard takes Shay away. Yuto looks behind at his unconscious

friend with a somber look in his eyes as he is taken away.
We get a montage of all the Lancers getting shoved into their cells and the officers locking them in.
We see Serena and Yuzu in a cell together, where Yuzu is breaking down. “I can’t believe we’re in jail! I’ve worked too hard on my duel school and education to have something like this screw up my life! What if I never get back home?” Yuzu cried, the realization of being in jail in another dimension finally hitting her. Serena looked at her cellmate sadly, and put her hands on Yuzu’s shoulders to ground her, something that she notably got from Yuto. Surprised by this calming gesture, Yuzu looked up at Serena. “We’ll get out of here.” Serena vowed, as she wiped a tear from her cellmate’s cheek with her hand.
We then cut to see Crow and Sylvio together, and they are no longer tied together in a net. Sylvio observes his new living quarters, and makes a disgusted face at the toilet. “This thing probably hasn’t been cleaned in years! And the beds don’t even have sheets!” He screeches out. ‘What? Are you used to 5 star treatment?’ Crow asked. “Well… Yeah…” Sylvio admitted. “Sorry buddy, but you’re gonna have to get used to it. Trust me, in this place, I’m sure you’ll get humbled HARD.” Crow told

him. Sylvio looked at the ground sadly.
We cut to Yuya and Gong, who are in a cell together. “Yuya… I think you need to let go of your father.” Gong admits. Yuya doesn’t say anything back. ‘Please answer me.’ Gong insists. “Whatever. Everyone is against my father… But you all didn’t know him like I did.” Yuya responds. “Boy, it’s been years since he left! I’ve protected you for years, and have been your shoulder to cry on every time! I already told you that you need to face your own problems! You have to move on.” Gong told him. Yuya ignored him, so Gong turned away sadly.
Move on… From my father? I can’t… Yuya thought somberly, and started tearing up. He looked at his deck of Performapal monsters, and clutched his Pendulum necklace. He pulled his goggles over his eyes. My father isn’t who everyone says he is. I know he isn’t… Bullies, friends, and even my own mom are trying to say that he’s bad. I don’t want to believe it… Without my father, who am I?

59. Rebirth

The episode begins with Reiji and Riley in a cell together. “You do have emotions. You’re afraid… Afraid of seeing those closest to you hurt.” Reiji tells her. ‘I don’t like this feeling… It’s squeezing me inside and I don’t know what to do.’ Riley admits. Reiji puts a hand on Riley’s head. “We’ll get out of here. That feeling will go away when you see them again.” He reassures her.

The scene transitions to Shay, who is in solitary confinement sitting with his head on his knees. He looks toward the camera with an angry glare, and we see a montage of random invasion scenes, along with his sister. Shay slams his fist into the wall, which is the only sound that can be heard in his quiet prison. Looking out of his cell is nothing but darkness. How did I get here? I should be at Duel Academy right now, killing those jerks who invaded my dimension! I should be… With Ruri.

We then see Dennis alone in his cell, staring outside. Admittedly, this turn of events wasn’t what I expected… But, I’m sure I can find a way to break Yuzu, Serena, and I out…

Later, we see guards go to almost everyone’s cells

and announce that it’s time for dinner. They gather them up and escort them to the main eating hall. Yuzu, Serena, and Shay are not present due to them being in solitary confinement. Their meals are delivered to them.

Yuya is first in line for food, along with Gong. Next is Sylvio, then Crow, then Shinji, and so on. Yuya is given a small amount of food, which upsets him. He tries to call out the fact that they have a large stock, despite saying otherwise. The Lancers and other people in the back of the line tell Yuya to move, so he obliges.

Sylvio gets his food, and while his first instinct is to yell like Yuya did, he knows that Crow wouldn’t like that, so he keeps his mouth shut.

As Yuya waits on the others, he notices some unnamed prisoners using their cards as currency for larger servings. “Don’t even think about it.” Crow warns him in an angry tone. “Just get used to rationing, and save your cards for more important things.” Says the guy who claims that food is more important than smiling… Yuya thinks indignantly.

Once the Lancers get their food, they meet up together. As Yuya is walking, someone trips him and spills water all over his food, making it gross and soggy. “Oops! That water came from the bucket I used to clean the bathrooms earlier!” An unnamed

prisoner sneered at him. ‘Hey! Now I can’t eat my food!’ Yuya yells angrily. The prisoner repeats Yuya’s words in a mocking tone. Sylvio prepares to physically fight the prisoner for Yuya’s sake, and Crow runs to defend HIM. However, a guard warns them that any further action will send them to solitary confinement. “This isn’t worth starting a fight over. We can share food with Yuya.” Yuto warns them, and the three back down.
“Reiji, what do we do about this?” Gong asked. ‘It would be in our best interests to escape.’ Reiji suggested. Shinji nods in agreement. “About time.” He says. “How do we go about doing that?” Yuya asks. “We should enact some sort of diversion that takes up the attention of all the guards so that we can find somewhere to escape from.” Reiji suggests. “What are we waiting for, then?” Crow exclaims, heading off. “Wait! Don’t you want to hear more?” Yuya asks. Crow grabs Yuya by the collar. “You’re part of the reason we’re even trapped here, so I don’t wanna hear it!” He snaps, and lets him go. Yuya watches in shock as Crow turns away, presumably back to his cell. Sylvio stares at him with a concerned look. Why does he gotta be such a jerk? Yuya thinks.
“We can’t escape yet. We need to locate where we can escape from, which may take up to a day at the

very least, given how large this place is. Once most of us know where the exit is, we can start a riot and get out of here." Reiji explains. 'And when we escape, what will we do to ensure that we won't get caught? Will we still be on the run?' Yuto asks. Reiji shakes his head. "I'll enter us all into the Friendship Cup. If we all qualify, which I'm sure we will, then Sector Security can't legally arrest us. Plus, it gives us enough publicity to spread the word to this dimension about the interdimensional war." He tells Yuto.

The guards announce that meal time is over, and everyone is taken back to their cells. With the plan in mind, everyone starts looking for an exit. Yugo spots some vents that appear to go through the ceiling. The openings look so old and rusted, I bet we could easily get them off!

Meanwhile, Sylvio arrives back at Crow's cell. "Hey." Sylvio greets him. 'Hey.' Crow says back. He's sitting on the floor, looking rather upset. "I'm sorry if I was too harsh on you earlier." Crow apologizes. "Oh no! It's fine! You were right, I needed to get used to things here!" Sylvio quickly says.

"So, you mentioned that you were used to 5 star treatment? You grew up comfortably? I'm surprised you're even making an effort to adjust. If a Topsider

were sent here, they'd make a ruckus about how they're entitled to good treatment." Crow tells him. 'Well, I used to be just like that, and maybe I still am to a degree… But I was taught an important lesson by a fellow Lancer. He said that people like me deserved the sorrow of the battlefield, and that he hoped that I would have nightmares about him until I learned to treat people better.' Sylvio explained. "That's… Harsh." Crow pointed out. "Yeah, but he was right. I used to be a massive jerk to the Lancers." Sylvio shrugged. "Is that what changed you?" Crow asked. Sylvio looked away, tears beginning to form in his eyes. "Partially." He clutched the crystalized pendant around his neck.
"It's beautiful…" Crow whispered, looking at the pendant. 'I'm surprised the guards didn't take it from you, what with it being a really expensive looking crystal.' Sylvio looked back at Crow. "My father gave this to me as a reminder of my mother, who wore something just like this… She died 4 years ago." Sylvio explained. Crow's eyes widened, but he didn't say anything. "But recently, my father was murdered… Well, technically my father hadn't actually given this to me yet. He was going to, but he died before he could. I just found it when I was going through his stuff. So I guess this pendant represents both of them now…" Sylvio admitted.

Crow wiped a tear from Sylvio's cheek. "You really are amazing." Crow told him. 'I… I am?' Sylvio sniffed. Crow nodded. "Well, yeah. You've changed for the better in such a short period of time. You've made friends, you make an effort to adapt to different situations, you wear an expensive pendant not to flaunt, but for sentimental value, and you've joined a rebellion to stop an interdimensional war to protect so many people… If anything, you're the kindest person I know." Crow tells him. Sylvio smiles at the praise. "Thank you, but… There are better people in the Lancers. They've all suffered more than I ever have… Yuya for instance…" Crow interrupts him. "No, Yuya isn't a better person than you. He's the one who's truly entitled, not you." He tells Sylvio. Sylvio can tell Crow is saying this because he's mad at Yuya, so he drops it and just nods.

"You're a good guy, Sylvio. You're a better person than most I know." Crow tells him. "Oh, and once we get out of here, I still need to serve you a full course meal." This makes Sylvio happy. Someone who enjoys food just as much as me? Yes sir! He thinks. Sylvio is truly something else… If he grew up rich and acted as bad as he says, and then changed for the better, then that's proof that anyone can change. It… It gives me hope for Topsiders and

for the future of this society. I don’t know how we can achieve it, but somehow, someday, this dimension will live in unity. Crow thought.

60. Proposition

The episode begins with Yuzu and Serena, as they are served a small breakfast serving. “Ugh.” Serena wrinkles her nose in disgust. A fly flies out of the food. “Hey, look.” Yuzu points at a vent in the ceiling. The girls nod at each other in a silent agreement.

At breakfast, the Lancers gather. “I saw large vents in the ceilings that connect to different places throughout this place.” Yugo informed them. Reiji nodded. ‘There appears to be a vent near random dead ends in this place, which leads me to believe that it connects to the outside.’ Reiji says. “Can we start the riot?” Shinji asks. “You can after I explain something else. Once Shinji starts the riot, we should all split up. Some of us can go break Serena, Yuzu, and Shay out of their confinement, while some of us can prepare to open the vents.” Reiji says. “I can go break the three out.” Yuto volunteers. “I can, too.” Yuya and Dennis say. “Alright, the rest of you can help break open vents.” Reiji says. “Alright, are we ready?” Shinji asked impatiently. Reiji nodded. “Yes. Everyone, split up.”

Shortly after, Shinji is seen fighting with some

random prisoners. A riot begins, and the guards are seen calling for back-up.
Yuto, Yuya, and Dennis are seen running toward the solitary confinement chambers, but they run into Yuzu and Serena running toward them. “Yuzu!” Yuya yells her name happily. ‘How did you escape?’ Yuto asked them. “There was a vent in our cell.” Yuzu told them. “What’s going on?” Serena asked. “We were coming to rescue you two damsels.” Dennis remarked. Serena snorted. “We didn’t need your help.” She retorted. “Have you seen Shay?” Yuto asked. Yuzu shook her head. “We’d better keep looking, then!” Dennis declared. “No crap, Sherlock.” Serena muttered. Why is Dennis so patronizing to Yuzu and I?
Meanwhile, Crow, Gong, and Yugo are trying to break open a vent. A Sector Security guard spots them, and is about to aim a net at Crow. However, he is knocked out by a frying pan that is thrown at the back of his head. Crow watches the guard fall, and stares in awe at Sylvio, who had been the one who threw the pan. “That was for when you tried to protect me from the net! We’re even now!” Sylvio yelled at Crow. They smiled at each other, and Crow resumed his work.
Shay is seen on a rampage, knocking out guards left and right in a single punch. He has somehow

managed to break out of his cell, and is running through the halls. He seems angrier and more unhinged than usual, which makes sense considering that he was in solitary confinement where he was left alone in his most likely depressed thoughts and PTSD flashbacks for over a day.

Shay turns a corner, where Yuto, Yuya, Dennis, Yuzu, and Serena are running toward him. Instinctively, Shay is about to punch, but Yuto grabs his hand just in time. “Yuto!” Shay gasps. ‘What’s going on?’ He asks. “We came to find you. Shinji started a riot and we’re about to escape.” Yuto said briefly. Shay nodded, and they all turned back around.

Back with Shinji, all of the guards in the Facility are fighting with all the prisoners, and Shinji manages to meet up with Crow, Gong, Sylvio, and Yugo. They managed to break the vent. “Alright, let’s go!” Shinji says. ‘What about Declan? Where is he?’ Gong asks. “Screw him, we don’t have time!” Shinji says. “But what about Riley?” Crow points out. This makes Shinji stop. “Fine, I’ll find them.” He mutters, and runs off. Crow, Gong, Sylvio, and Yugo enter the vent.

It turns out, Reiji and Riley are trying to break a vent as well, and haven’t noticed that one has been opened. “Hey! A vent’s been opened!” Shinji calls

them. Reiji nods, and he and Riley go to the opened vent.
The other Lancers arrive at the main area, where the riot is still going on. Yuto looks around, and sees the opened vent. “It’s over there! That’s where we can escape!” He tells them. They enter the vent.
“Uh, do we actually know where we’re going? Cause we can’t turn back!” Yugo remarks. ‘We weren’t going to turn back anyway.’ Crow tells him. “Wasn’t this your idea?” Gong points out. “Ohhh I guess it was!” Yugo laughed.
Everyone ends up making it to the roof of the Facility. Suddenly, some guards notice them escaping, so they decide to jump into the water below. This scares Yuya and Sylvio due to the height. Sylvio’s hand is taken by Crow’s as they both jump into the water together, and Gong pushes Yuya in.
The Lancers swim towards land, and eventually reach shore. However, they are stopped by a helicopter with Roget in it, who tries to arrest them again. However, a hologram of a group of old people appears. “Stop, Roget. The Council’s orders override Sector Security.” They demand. Roget scoffs, but ultimately obliges.
“We have observed that you have used alien summoning methods… You all aren’t from here, are

you?" A Council member asks. 'No. We are not.' Reiji confirms. "Why are you here?" They ask. Reiji goes on to explain to the council about how they've come to warn them about the threat of an interdimensional war. "They've already started destroying one dimension, and have started invading another. It's only a matter of time before they show up again. We could really use your help; your alliance could help us defend your city." Reiji says, carefully considering his words. The Council members decide to agree on this, and they decide to let them all go free. "I've sent a message to the Facility to drop your charges and give you your duel disks back." A Council member explained. Reiji thanked them. "However, in return, you all must compete in the Friendship Cup. If one of you manages to win, we will agree to an alliance." A Council Member explains. Reiji agrees to this, and they are free to escape. Roget is forced to fly away, giving Reiji an angry glare.

"What is this Friendship Cup?" Dennis asks. 'It used to be used as a way to unite the Topsiders and Commons, but now it's just used for the Topsider's entertainment. It's a cruel reminder that the Topsiders control everything… "Crow explains." We can use this as an opportunity to warn the dimension about the war.' Reiji tells him. "I guess

you’re right…” Crow says, clearly caring about his society’s issues more.
Conveniently, Reiji spots a poster advertising the Friendship Cup. It mentions the date of when it starts, and that each duelist will be provided a motorcycle and turbo dueling outfit. “What about driving lessons?” Sylvio asks nervously. “You won’t need them. The motorcycles will set on auto-pilot once you duel.” Crow says.
They all agree to head back to Crow’s place so that they can see the kids.
Back at the house, they reunite with the kids. Crow explains to them that they’ll have to leave for the Friendship Cup in the morning, but that the other Commoners will take care of them. “Be sure to watch for us on TV!” Crow tells them. “We will!” The kids say in excitement.
The episode ends with Yugo getting ready for bed in the bathroom, when Yuzu walks in. “Why are you so jittery?” She asks. “Rin and I have dreamed about entering the Friendship Cup for years! They say the winner gets soooo much money, and even a spot among Topsiders! With that much money, Rin and I could live a stable life and unite the Commoners and Topsiders! Man, I can’t wait!” Yugo exclaimed with stars in his eyes. Yuzu smiles. We’ll get through this

tournament, and we'll be one step closer to Duel Academy. Yugo, I promise we'll get Rin back…

61. Welcome to the Friendship Cup!

The episode begins with a helicopter ride to the central Friendship Cup arena, as sent per the Council's request.

Once they arrive, some officiants tell the Lancers that the Council has granted them all access to one large room that they can share, as they are a group. The room ends up having multiple rooms, such as 10 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 kitchen, and 1 large living room. "Oh, and by the way, the Council has requested the Pendulum Summoner to duel Jack in the exhibition match." A boy officiant says. He points to Yuya. 'What?' He exclaims. "Your match begins in an hour." He says, and they escort them to the room.

The boy goes on to explain to each of them how before each duel, they will be suited with their turbo dueling outfits and will be ordered to drive into the arena as soon as it begins.

The officiants leave, and the Lancers admire the fancy living quarters. "No way! There's a flat-screen TV in here?" Crow gasps. Sylvio opens the fridge, and is excited to see it full of food. "Crow! There's

so much food in here!” He gestures him over, and he notices there’s a freezer, pantry, and a microwave.
‘Hey, so… Any idea of who Jack is?’ Yuya asks. “He’s the reigning, undefeated champion. Has been for years… And a traitor.” Shinji explains. “Is that true?” He asks Crow, but he doesn’t answer. He’s still mad at me? Yuya wonders. “Jack used to be a Commoner like us… He won the tournament, which made us think that he’d have enough influence to make a change in our society… But he didn’t. He just became one of them.” Shinji said angrily.
The officiants call Yuya down for his match against Jack, which makes him gulp. “Don’t worry, you got this!” Gong encourages. Crow narrows his eyes as he watches Yuya exit. “Jack’s gonna wipe the floor with him. If anyone’s gonna open Yuya’s eyes to the harsh realities of our situation, it’ll be him.” Crow says dramatically. While everyone wants to hope Yuya will win, they can’t help but believe Crow.
An announcer named Melissa Trail (with a heavy Country accent and dressed as a cowgirl) announces the beginning of the Friendship Cup, giving a reminder that it’s named for being “unity among classes.” She announces the exhibition match, and says ‘20,000 people have gathered here today! Let’s start the duel!’
Yuya is nervous as he revs the engines to his

motorcycle. When he is given the greenlight, he pushes on the pedal, and is shocked to be going so fast into the arena. Yuya briefly panics as he feels like he doesn't have control over his motorcycle, but he sets in on autopilot. "Introducing the Master of Faster himself, the king of all duels, it's Jacccck Atlasss!" Melissa announces. The crowds go wild as Jack's donut shaped motorcycle appears. "Who's the Master of Faster, who rules the duel?" Jack asks. "Jack!" The crowd chants. "That's right, it's me!" Didn't expect such a heavy British accent! Yuya thinks.

Back with the Lancers, Yuzu asks what the point of the exhibition match is. "It's to show off the king's strength. Ultimately, the point of this tournament is to decide who gets to duel Jack. This match is pretty low-stakes, so even if Yuya loses, he still gets to compete." Yugo says. 'So… There's no point to it?' Serena asks. "The point is to use your friend as a sacrifice for the king… And as someone to root against." Crow finally says. Everyone gasps.

Jack parks his motorcycle next to Yuya, and addresses the audience. "How many turns will it take to defeat my opponent?" Jack asks. Yuya is shocked by this brash statement. 'One!' They all chant. "Technically yes… But! That wouldn't be entertaining, now would it?" Jack remarks.

Entertaining? Yuya wonders. “I will give you a show, because that’s what you paid for! I’ll beat this kid in three turns, so that you can see the story progression. Turn one will be how I set-up my strategy, turn two will show off my opponent’s struggle, and turn three will be the climax and end in my opponent’s defeat!” Jack says, holding up three fingers. Yuya notices the large TV’s above them, and how their duel is being broadcasted everywhere. What a jerk, saying he’ll beat me in three turns! What sick entertainment! I’ll show Jack real entertainment! He thinks.

Melissa puts up the dueling field, and briefly explains the rules of a turbo duel. Basically, all you need to know is that there are speed spells that can only be used if you have a certain number of counters.

Jack takes the first turn, as he said, because he beat Yuya in a race to the first corner.

Throughout the duel, Yuya goes on to spread his father’s belief about dueltaining and the whole spiel about smiles and stuff. I’m sparing you from having to hear it all again, because I’m tired of writing it, as you all are probably tired of hearing it. “Entertainment? A duel is about self-satisfaction. You don’t owe the crowd anything! It’s their choice if they consider it entertainment or not!” Jack tells

him. Yuya begins to protest, but Jack tells him, “I can tell that you’re not dueling from your heart. You’re not being true to yourself. Stop spreading your father’s beliefs and grow up! Have your own opinions for once and stop being selfish! Your insistence on preaching your father’s philosophies are just holding you back… And will ultimately lead to your defeat!” Jack announces. Yuya is shocked by how perceptive Jack is, but before he can protest, Jack starts his next turn. This is the third turn of the duel.

‘You don’t have the strength to reach anywhere near my level! Your dueling was mediocre at best!’ Jack insults him, as he declares a direct attack. “Bow before your king!” He declares as Yuya is sent flying, his life points reaching 0.

Most of the Lancers aren’t shocked by this outcome, but are still disheartened by it. “He really beat him in three turns…” Yuzu whispered. “Poor guy’s gotten humiliated right off the bat.” Yugo points out.

Yuya hit the ground so hard the officiants had to carry him on a stretcher. He thinks about what Jack said to him. “I can tell that you’re not dueling from your heart. You’re not being true to yourself. Stop spreading your father’s beliefs and grow up! Have your own opinions for once and stop being selfish! Your insistence on preaching your father’s

philosophies are just holding you back…” Yuya feels a tear run down his cheek, but he can’t find the strength to argue with the voice in his head. I’m not… Being true to myself?

62. Admission

The episode begins with Yuya being carried back to the room in a stretcher. “His injuries aren’t bad, he just needs to rest up.” The officiants reassure the Lancers. The Lancers ask if he is okay, and Yuya puts on a smile and claims that he is. Obviously, Yuzu and Gong can see through this.

Yuya is laid to rest, where he thinks a bit. Am I not being true to myself? I thought I was… But lately, my dueling has been lacking. I don’t feel as happy as usual… I’m constantly stressed about something; Yuzu, the war, defending my father… My father… Why is he causing me stress? Wait… Why is Yuzu causing me stress? We get a montage of Yuzu basically just smiling and looking cute. Yuya blushes. She can’t be causing me stress… I love her. Wait… He immediately gets up and looks around the room, before realizing that he was placed in the back bedroom. Yuzu…

Later that day, Yuzu and Serena are planning to go to the arcade on the bottom floor. “I mean, what’s stopping us? We can’t get arrested again!” Yuzu exclaims. Serena nods. ‘Yeah, I’d like that.’

Suddenly, Yuya comes into the bedroom Yuzu and

Serena are in. “Couldn’t you have knocked?” Yuzu asked. “Uhhh, Yuzu? Can I talk to you for a second?” Yuya asks. Yuzu and Serena glance at each other, before she gets up. “Fine.”
They walk out of their “room” and go into the hallway in private. “Hey, Yuzu, I… Well, I really like you. Like, love you. I have since you started learning to Fusion summon, and whenever you’d hang out with Yuto… I just really admire your dedication to protecting the Yusho school, and I really…” Yuya blabbered on, but Yuzu interrupted him.
‘Look, I know that you like me… But I’m sorry, I don’t. I don’t really think things have been the same between us since then, anyway. I’m sick of you always being stuck in the past and trying to drag me into it. I’ve listened enough; so can you please just move on and stop burdening others with your issues? Yusho was a bad man, okay? He abused your mom, he abandoned his own people, he abandoned the XYZ Dimension right before the invasion, and honestly? His beliefs are full of toxic positivity. Yusho has convinced you to suppress your own feelings for the sake of smiling. There, I said it. So stop trying to be like him. I know you’re better than that.’ Yuzu told him calmly but forcefully, her eyes blazing in anger. Yuya couldn’t find the words to

speak. Not only had he been rejected, but his crush had exposed him. “Look, I didn’t want to tell you that, but it just hurts to see you devote your life after the man who hurt so many.” Yuzu said, trying to soften the blow.
“How could you say that? Don’t you understand?” Yuya asked, starting to cry. ‘I do understand… I just don’t want to see you hurt anymore!’ Yuzu told him, and she was shocked to hear herself saying Yuto’s words. “Yuzu… I…” Yuya tried to protest. “No, I think it would do us some good to stop being friends for a little bit.” Yuzu told him. “I need some time to think. Are you really a friend, if all you do is make me pity you all the time? Plus, I just rejected you… And maybe you should consider what I’ve told you about Yusho. Please. Stop hurting yourself.” Yuzu insisted. Yuya didn’t reply, and he ran back into the “room” and slammed the door shut to his room and started crying more.
Serena came out to see Yuzu out in the hallway. “What happened?” She asked. Yuzu sighed. ‘Something that should’ve happened a long time ago.’ She said. “You told him…?” Serena asked. She nodded. “Yeah, I told him the truth. Enough about Yuya, wanna go down?” Yuzu asked. Serena nodded, and the two went downstairs. She noticed how Yuzu looked somewhat sad.

Back with Yuya, he is seen still crying. Was Yuzu right? Is my father terrible? What am I doing? His emotions and brain was all over the place, and out of pure impulse, he tore his Pendulum necklace off and threw it against the wall; both in anger and confusion. Yuzu would know if my father was truly as bad as everyone says… I don't know anymore. Why is my life like this? Why am I like this? Why did he have to do this to me? Yuya's mind was plagued with questions, and he tore his room apart.

Meanwhile, Yuzu and Serena are having fun at the arcade. "So close!" Yuzu exclaims, watching Serena almost make the ball land in the ring. 'Watch this!' She says with a determined look, and she manages to get it. "High score!" Serena celebrates, and Yuzu joins in. They do a perfectly timed jump high five. The camera zooms in on their bracelets. Serena suddenly hugs Yuzu after this, which surprises her. "I'm usually the one initiating." Yuzu remarks. "I felt like you needed it." Serena quickly said, blushing. "If… If not then…" Yuzu interrupted. "No, it's fine! You're getting better at picking up people's emotions!" She reassured Serena. "Oh… Thanks." Yuzu smiles.

"I'm so happy that you joined the Lancers." Yuzu admits. 'I wouldn't be here without you.' Serena tells her. Yuzu smiles again. "I'm glad you listened

to me back then.” She says. “I’m glad I did, too.” Serena says quietly, smiling at Yuzu. The episode ends with them staring at each other’s eyes, and with Serena thinking, why do I feel this way? What is Yuzu doing to me…? Whatever it is, it feels nice. I hope we can stay like this forever…

63. Origins: Yugo Damare

The episode begins with Yugo and Rin together, already seemingly in an established relationship. They are in the house that the Lancers were previously at.

Yugo is seen laying out a blueprint of parts he'll need to build a motorcycle. Rin is worried about the expenses, but he reassures her. "We'll find a way to make it work!" He smiled his usual goofy grin.

A montage of the two of them making money through odd jobs occurs, until they are able to finally make Yugo's motorcycle.

Once it is finished, they jump while holding each other. "We can finally enter the Friendship Cup!" Rin declares in excitement. 'Yeah!' Yugo agrees. They laugh together, excited to finally have made progress. "One of us will dethrone Jack, and after that, we'll be living it up!" Yugo says. "Maybe then we can find a way to bring the Commons and Topsiders together." Rin wonders. Yugo nods, extending a fist toward her. "We got this." He says, and she extends her fist out too.

We then see the two of them riding the duel runner together. Rin is gripping onto Yugo tighter than she

needs to to stay on, which is making them blush.
They end up at a very familiar looking park, where they are seen lying on the grass looking up at the stars. “One day, we’ll be gazing up at these stars from the view of a skyscraper!” Yugo tells her. Rin nods. “We’ll have an even better view of the stars from there.” She says. They appear to be holding hands and lying very close to each other.
In a new scene, we see the two of them walking together. Someone bumps into Yugo, which makes him mad. “Do you know who I am? I’m Yugo!” He yells. “Hugo?” The person accidentally says. This makes Yugo mad, but Rin tries to calm the two down, and quickly takes his hand and runs off.
‘Your temper could really use some work. You could’ve attracted police attention!’ Rin scolded him. “I guess you’re right…” Yugo said, immediately cooling off. “You could really use a speed bump for that mouth of yours.” She tells him. “Alright, I promise that I’ll try to be less impulsive…” Yugo tells her.
We see a scene of the two of them cleaning the house, and Rin sees a bug and gets scared. “Yugoooo! Come kill this bug!” She yells from across the house. He comes in with a paper towel and tries to crush it, but comedically keeps missing. It ends up on his face and Rin slaps his face with a

rolled up newspaper. ‘Heyyyy… “Yugo says, feeling hurt after being hit in the face.” Oh, sorry!’ Rin apologizes, getting a washcloth and rubbing the dead bug off his face. “Y’know, you could’ve just killed it yourself.” Yugo told her. She smiled. “Yeah, but it’s more fun watching you struggle.” Rin teased. “Oh I’ll show you a struggle!” Yugo says, picking her up. “Hey! Put me down!” Rin yells, but she isn’t really offended. They plop down on the couch together, and Yugo kisses her.

They gaze into each other’s eyes for a few seconds. “Y’know, you’re the best thing that’s ever happened to me.” Rin admitted. ‘Where did that come from?’ Yugo asked. “Well, I think we’re the only Commoners who are enjoying life amidst all the injustice and police brutality…” Rin says. “Yeah, I guess… But I think we’re just naturally upbeat people.” Yugo admits. She touches her index finger to his chest. “Come on! Just admit that we’re happier because we’re together!” Rin presses. Yugo is caught off guard by her touching him, and blushes for a second. “Alright, alright, you’re right!” He says, and Rin gets on top of him. “Hey!” Yugo says, but he’s silenced by Rin kissing him.

One night, Yugo is waiting for Rin to come home, but she never does. “That’s strange…” He mutters, and decides to go outside to look for her. It’s already

dark out… I can’t believe she’d be out this late by herself. Yugo gets worried about her safety when he realizes it. Oh crap, it is dark! I hope she’s okay! He takes off running.
“Rin? Rin Rin!” Yugo calls her name, but he can’t find her. A montage of him running in the dark trying to find her plays.
Eventually, Yugo sees a cloaked figure who is holding an unconscious Rin over their shoulder. “Hey, you creep! What are you doing?” Yugo yells, and chases after them. ‘And who might you be?’ The figure asks. “I’m Yugo Damare! Now give Rin back!” He yells. The figure smiles and runs. Yugo only gets a look at the guy’s face, before he vanishes into purple light. Yugo falls to his knees in despair. “Rinnnnnn!” He yells, and starts to cry. Yugo turns to go back to his house. I’ll get you back! I’ll find you! He swears to himself.
In a new scene, we see Yugo riding his motorcycle, and Clear Wing Synchro Dragon is seen teleporting him to the roof of an XYZ Dimension’s building. “Huh? Where am I? What happened to this place?” Yugo asks out loud. He’s shocked to see how much debris and dust is everywhere. Is this the remnants of a fallen civilization? He wonders.
Suddenly, Yugo looks down to see a cloaked guy crying. He recognizes the guy’s face instantly. He

clenches his fist. That's the creep who stole Rin! The face is exactly the same, and he's wearing a cloak! He thinks. Yugo revs his engines. The guy looks up at him from the ground.
"Who are you?" He asks. What the heck? How does this guy not know me! I literally told him my name! Yugo thought angrily. 'What do you mean, who am I? You know me already! I'm Yugo Damare, and you captured Rin!' He yells at the cloaked stranger.
"I've never seen you before in my life!" The cloaked stranger retorts. Liar! What a nerve to play dumb with me! "Don't play dumb! You kidnapper, creep! How could you take her away from me?" Yugo yells at him. "Wait! My girlfriend was kidnapped recently! Maybe we're looking for the same person!" The cloaked duelist yelled back. I've had enough! Yugo presses the pedal, and aims his motorcycle at the duelist and attempts to run him over in anger. He activates his duel disk, and so does the cloaked figure.
Yugo summons Clear Wing Synchro Dragon. Similarly, the cloaked stranger summons Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon. "You liar! You're probably just trying to deflect!" Yugo accused. "I suppose I could say the same to you!" The cloaked duelist said angrily.
Before things can continue, Yugo spots

reinforcements coming. Shoot! I should get out of here! He turns his motorcycle around and leaves the cloaked duelist behind.

As Yugo drives away, he slams his fist down in anger. I'll get revenge on you for what you did to Rin! I'll do anything to get her back!

64. Lightening the Mood

The episode begins with Yugo observing everyone. Man, so many people are so down lately! Yuya's been crying in his room, Yuzu's been confused, Riley's been isolating herself since Declan went out to get food, Gong hasn't said much, Crow and Shinji are being real downers, and Shay and Yuto… He glanced over at Shay and Yuto standing behind everyone by themselves. Well… They're always so depressing to look at… Yugo thinks. I'm sick of this! We gotta get some action going on here! Yugo turns to see Dennis.

"Hey, can you do me a favor?" Yugo asks. Dennis smiles. 'What can I do for you?' He exclaims. "Can we figure out a way to cheer everyone up?" Yugo whispers in his ear. "Of course! I always want to spread joy to people! What did you have in mind?" Dennis exclaimed. Yugo smiled. "Well, I was thinking we should bring in some games…" He says.

The scene cuts to Yugo and Dennis calling everyone around the kitchen table. "Since the Friendship Cup's next match won't start for a while, let's gather round!" Dennis announces. 'Hey, could someone get

Yuya out of his room?' Yugo asks. Yuto nods. "I'll get him." Yugo smiles at the XYZ user. "Thanks, bro!" He gives Yuto a thumbs up. Yuto tries to hide a smile as he turns away.
"Hey, does anyone know where Serena and Yuzu are?" Dennis asks. 'I think they went to the arcade.' Gong informs them. Just then, the two girls enter right on cue. "Oh there you are! Come join in!" Dennis tells them.
"Yuya?" Yuto enters Yuya's room to see the floor covered in tissues and Yuya crying on the floor. He looks up at Yuto, and Yuto can see Yuya's nose is a fire engine red. 'Sorry about the mess.' Yuya apologizes. "It's alright. By the way, Dennis and Yugo were wondering if you wanted to participate in their game tournament. They're trying to cheer everyone up." Yuto informed. "Sure, why not." Yuya sighed, and got up. Yuto gave Yuya a sympathetic glance before leaving together.
"Hey Riley! Come over and join the party!" Dennis called. Riley slowly lifted their head off her knees. 'Is that an order?' She asked. "Not everything's an order in life, kiddo. Sometimes people do things because they want to!" Dennis told her. Riley nodded, and came over to them.
"Alright! First off, UNO Attack!" Yugo declares, revealing the UNO cards and card shooter. 'You all

are going down!' Sylvio yells. "It's on, chicken head!" Serena yelled back. "Ch… Chicken head?" Sylvio asked. Yuzu shook her head in slight disappointment. I need to teach Serena how to trash talk…

Everyone is given their cards, and Yugo goes first. He flips the card over, and the starting card is a blue three. Quickly, everyone takes their turns, but competitive attitudes arise. Shay is the first to have to press the button. "Yuya played a reverse…" He grumbled. 'And it looks like Shay is the first to press the button!' Dennis spectates. He presses it, but no cards come out. "Hey! Why did you skip me?" Sylvio accused Yuzu. "Sorry, but if you thought you could beat me, then you'd better wake up!" She told him. Serena looked over at Yuzu. That's way better than chicken head…

"Hey Shay, press it again!" Crow says, playing a press two. 'What was that for?' He asked. "You need to get more cards so that you can stop Yuya! He's almost out!" Crow tells him. Shay nods in understanding. "Wow, great job! What a strategic move!" Sylvio praises Crow. Shay presses the button, and is given seven cards from the machine. "Oooh! That's a lot!" Dennis comments. "Shut up!" Shay yells. Yuto smiles. It's been a while since Shay and I have played a game for fun…

Shay plays a swap card and chooses Yuya. “What? No fair!” Yuya exclaims, but he is forced to switch. “Good job!” Crow gives Shay a thumbs up. Shay is taken aback by this, and just nods.
Shinji is forced to press the button, and 10 cards come out. “Oooooh!” Dennis exclaims.
Riley tentatively is forced to press the button, but nothing comes out.
Gong plays the reverse. “It’s back to you, Riley!” He tells her. She plays a skip on Yuya. ‘What?’ Yuya exclaims. “Sorry.” Riley whispers. You weren’t supposed to play that! Now Shay’s gonna win! Gong thinks.
Shay uses his last card. “I did it!” He yells out, raising his arm in the air in victory. Yuto smiles at him. “You were really getting into it…” He comments. “Yeah, I guess so…” Shay responds. “Shay is the winner!” Dennis declares.
Reiji eventually gets back with food. “A game tournament? Sure, why not.” Reiji agrees to join in.
They play Spoons next, and Serena is the dealer. Yuzu is standing next to her. “Come on, Serena! Give me something good!” She says. “I can’t control that!” Serena quickly replies. Sylvio and Crow are at the opposite side of the dealer, putting them at a disadvantage. The two duos are the only two teaming up. As for everyone else, it’s every Lancer

for themself.
‘Unfortunately, all the spoons are in the sink, so we’re playing with forks and knives!’ Yugo tells them. Yuto gives him a weirded out look. “Why are we playing with the only two utensils that can stab you?” He questions. “It’s what we got, buddy.” Yugo says. For some reason, no one else protests. Guess we all just gotta grab the handles. Yuya thinks.
Comedically, they all strategize. “Okay, I’ll go for the knife across from me, and you go for the knife across from you. Both of them have the handles facing us, so we won’t get hurt.” Yuzu whispers to Serena. ‘Got it.’ She agrees. “Crow, I’ll get a fork for you!” Sylvio whispers. I’m gonna slam my hand down on the edge of the fork. Due to how the fork is angled upwards, it will launch it across the room to create a diversion, and let them all fight over it… Meanwhile I’ll be free to have all the utensils on the table… Reiji plots. He says this with a serious, straight face. I’m just gonna go for whichever is closest! Yugo thinks, which is a sharp contrast to Reiji. I’ve secured my place to be on the horizontal side of the table, meaning I have more access to the forks and knives than those on the further ends… So I realistically only need to worry about six of them… Yuto thinks. I’m the tallest one here, so I should have the longest reach… Therefore, I

shouldn’t go for the one closest to me. After all, I wanna give Riley a chance. Gong thinks. All of my time as a warrior in the rebellion against Duel Academy has trained me for this! Shay thinks with a serious expression. Since I’m the only one here wearing gloves, I can choose any fork or knife, no matter what direction they’re facing. “Hey everyone! I’m aiming for the spoon in the middle!” Yuya yells to throw them all off. What are you doing? It’s so obvious that you’re lying! Gong wonders.

The game starts. Serena passes a card to Yuzu, and she passes a card to Reiji, and so on. There’s major tension in the air, as everyone is trying to pay attention to their cards, keeping up with the rate of people putting down cards, and seeing if they need to grab a utensil. “Yoohoo!” Sylvio yells, trying to distract people. ‘I’ve almost got four of a kind!’ Yuya yells. Everyone tenses. Shinji moves his arm to the middle to create a diversion, which makes Shay and Yuya take the bait. “Hey! No one’s gotten four of a kind! Restart!” Dennis yells. Shay and Yuya glare at Shinji angrily. “No one is allowed to do that!” Dennis declares.

The game restarts. This time, Yugo gets four of a kind first and yells “yes!” He dives in and grabs a knife, prompting everyone to start reaching for the

center. Yuzu tries to grab the fork in front of her, but Reiji, who is standing next to her, slams his hand on the end of the fork which sends it flying to the opposite end of the room. Yuzu and Gong chase after it, which gives Reiji more free range. Shay steals a fork from in front of Shinji, which almost starts a fight between them. Shinji dives forward onto the table, and he extends his arm. Everything is in slow motion. He is blocked by Sylvio, who manages to take a fork and a knife. He gives the fork to Crow, just like he said. ‘Dang, you have great reflexes!’ Crow praises. Also in slow motion, Yuzu and Gong reach for the fork that was flung to the opposite end of the room, and Yuzu manages to get it first. This makes Gong race back to the table, and he accidently pushes the table forward, knocking a knife out of Yuya and Riley’s hands. They fall to the floor, and the two of them, along with Shinji and Gong, all race under the table. Gong holds Shinji back as Yuya and Riley pick up their forks. “You should let Riley get one! I thought you of all people should know that!” Gong scolds him. Gong and Shinji are the only ones left without a fork or knife, meaning there is one more. “Where is it?” Shinji demands. “Oops! You mean this?” Sylvio asks, revealing that he had an extra knife. “Give it back!” Shinji snaps. “Sure!” Sylvio says, and he throws the

knife toward Shinji, but Gong catches it instead. Shinji is absolutely PO'd. "Shinji's out!" Dennis yells. "Thanks for getting Shinji out." Crow whispers. "Uh, thanks?" Sylvio says. Oh, right… They're ex's…

Another round commences, and Riley is the one to get four of a kind first. However, she is subtle about it, and manages to steal a fork and nobody notices. Things go on for a while before anyone notices. Yuto is the next to catch on, and also steals a fork without anyone noticing. Reiji notices, and also succeeds. However, once Serena notices, she leaps forward, which makes everyone notice. Yuzu is eliminated in that round. "I'll avenge you." Serena says dramatically. "You don't have to! It's a game!" Yuzu tries to explain.

When Yuto is eliminated, Shay dramatically says, "I will avenge my fallen comrade… Just like the resistance, we will never truly be defeated and will come back to strike you down with more force!" Dennis facepalms. "Chill out! It's just a game!" He tells him.

Eventually, the game is down to just Reiji and Riley. "At this point, it's less about speed and more about luck of the draw." Gong comments. Pretty much everyone is rooting for Riley, but especially Crow, Shinji, and Gong. 'Ready?' Reiji asks Riley. She

nods. Reiji is the dealer, and he starts flipping cards at an insanely fast rate. “Jeez! How can the kid keep up?” Yugo wonders. “I can tell that she isn’t like your ordinary kid.” Yuto tells him. “It’s kind of sad…” He whispers. Shay and Yuzu are the only ones who hear him say this.

Eventually, Riley wins. Reiji dips his head. “Good job, Riley.” He congratulates her. Riley smiles. ‘I… Won?’ She asks. Dennis nodded. “Congratulations! You won the craziest game of spoons ever witnessed!” He announced. The Lancers start cheering, and do the thing in movies where they carry Riley on her back and throw her in the air.

We then see a montage of scenes from different games: we see Crow and Shinji accusing each other in mafia, Shay and Crow teaming up for the egg spoon race, Yuzu and Serena teaming up in a relay, and Riley schooling everyone at chess.

At the end of the day, everyone is chatting at the table, as if they had all been friends for years. “Thanks for organizing all those games for us, Yugo and Dennis.” Gong thanks them. Everyone else cheers their names. ‘Man, remember when Riley destroyed everyone in spoons? That was awesome!’ Yuya exclaimed. “Did you see how fast Crow and Sylvio killed everyone in mafia?” Yugo pointed out. “It was well played.” Yuto agreed. “Did you see how

fast Crow was in the egg spoon race? He could be a marathon runner with that speed!" Sylvio complimented Crow. "Agreed. I was impressed you kept up." Shay told Crow. "Thanks." He said, and the two fist-bumped. Shay's finally warming up to people again… Yuto thought.
Shay approached Dennis and Yugo. "I apologize for my behavior. I was wrong about you two… I see now that you two are worthy to be considered comrades. I look forward to taking down Duel Academy with you, and with everyone." Shay said. 'Hey, it's all good man!' Yugo smiled. Dennis nodded. "Yeah! It's fine! I know how much you want to get your sister back." He told Shay. Shay nodded, and turned away.
Shay smiled to himself. I know who Dennis is now… I remember… He has a flashback to when he, Yuto, Ruri, Kaito, Allen, and Sayaka were watching Yusho dueltain. He remembered seeing Ruri chat with Dennis, who had been in Heartland at the time. Shay walks up to Yuto. "I finally remembered him… Dennis was the guy Ruri talked to when we were all watching Yusho." Shay whispered to him. Yuto smiled. "That makes more sense. That's where I know him from…" Shay nodded. "I had the weirdest sense of deja vu

whenever I’d see him. I’m glad that I know now that he really is on our side.” Shay said.

65. Heavyweights

The episode begins with Crow and Gong preparing for their duel in the Friendship Cup, as they have the first duel. The Lancers are conflicted, as they don't know who to root for. "If one of you loses, what happens?" Yuya asked. 'Probably something bad, knowing the Topsiders.' Crow admits. "It's nothing personal Gong, but I can't lose. I have to be a representative to the Commons of this dimension, and I want my kids to see me get far…" Crow explains. "I get it, but I don't want to lose either." He says.

Crow and Gong leave, and the Lancers turn the TV on. "Popcorn, anyone?" Yugo offers. "Yes please!" Sylvio exclaims.

Shortly after, the Lancers see Gong and Crow on their motorcycles dueling. Shinji enters the room, implying that he was out… somewhere. "I heard that the losers of this tournament are forced to work underground for the rest of their lives… They're forced into hard labor, and are never allowed back to the surface. They literally work to death." Shinji informed them.

Everyone gets worried, but Sylvio is the most

fearful. “No! Crow can’t be sent away!” Sylvio yells. Shinji narrows his eyes. ‘Why do you care so much about Crow? You’re just a rich boy, and you always will be. I can’t believe he’d associate with people of your kind.’ Shinji snapped at him. “No, he’s one of us now.” Yugo defends Sylvio. The rest of the Lancers also come to his defense, much to his shock. “Sylvio has earned his place among the Lancers just like the rest of us. His background doesn’t matter; we all come from scarred backgrounds and have done things we’d rather not speak of.” Yuto tells Shinji, and they glare at each other. This guy hardly ever says anything… Why is his glare so intense? “Thanks, Yuto.” Sylvio says. Yuto nods. Shinji backs down.

Meanwhile, the Crow and Shinji’s kids are watching the duel. “C’mon Crow, you can do it! Just put a little effort into it!” The kids chant. The unnamed Commoners associated with Crow and Shinji also watch.

In a close match between Blackwings and Superheavy Samurais, ultimately, Crow comes out on top. Everyone gasps. “No! Gong!” Yuya yells, and runs to the door. Reiji holds him back. ‘You can’t interfere.’ He tells him. “But what if Gong is being sent away? I have to help him!” Yuya cries out. “We’ll figure that out later. We can’t risk being

caught interfering with the Friendship Cup, or else the Council members will break their alliance with us. We must make some sacrifices for the sake of advancing forward in this war. Besides, Gong can hold his own." Reiji reasoned. This calmed Yuya down, and he stopped arguing.

"The next match is Shinji Weber vs…" Melissa Trail announces. His opponent is some unnamed Topsider. Perfect! This is my moment to show the Synchro Dimension that the Commoners can unite and bring justice! Shinji thinks.

66. Remembrance and Acknowledgement

The episode begins with Crow coming back, and Shinji heading out without a word passed between them. “Crow!” Sylvio welcomes him back, hugging him. ‘I’m not going anywhere.’ Crow reassures him, patting him on the back. He looked up at Yuya. “I felt bad for beating Gong, but I had to.” Crow admits. Yuya turns away and gives him the silent treatment, which makes Crow frown and hug Sylvio tighter.

Some of the Lancers gather to watch Shinji’s duel, but others are reluctant. “Do we have to? I mean, he’s a total jerk!” Serena pointed out. Yuzu couldn’t help but agree. All Shinji has done is cause drama… “Yeah, I ain’t watching my ex injure another Topsider. I’m outta here.” Crow said. Sylvio followed closely behind. Another? He wondered.

Crow, Sylvio, Serena, and Yuzu leave, leaving the rest of the Lancers to watch the duel. The rest of the Lancers don’t exactly like Shinji either, but they stay out of politeness.

Serena and Yuzu head to a spa together. “You’ve never been to a spa?” Yuzu asked. Serena shook her

head. ‘Prepare to be amazed!’ Yuzu says, taking her hand and dragging her in. She orders a 1 hour spa treatment for her and Serena at the desk. “They can’t charge us anything since we’re competitors in the Friendship Cup! So we may as well take advantage of this.” Yuzu remarked. Serena nodded. “Right this way, ladies.” A woman with dark hair tells them.

Sylvio follows Crow outside of the Friendship Cup’s stadium completely, and they end up alone in an alleyway together. “I just needed a breath of fresh air, away from Shinji. You didn’t have to come all this way.” Crow tells him. ‘Well, I thought that you could use someone to talk to.’ Sylvio explained. The two sat down next to each other, their backs against the wall. “You’re right. We haven’t known each other for very long, and already you can read me better than the person who used to mean everything to me.” Crow admits. “Huh?” Sylvio is taken aback by the compliment.

“Well, you see… Like most Commons, my parents couldn’t afford to raise me, so they abandoned me. I was raised in an orphanage with some nice ladies and some other kids, but we weren’t that close. That’s where I met Shinji, and he meant a lot to me… He was always the one to make bold statements about overthrowing the Topsiders and uniting the two classes, and beating Jack…” Crow

explained. ‘Oh.’ Sylvio whispered. Crow lost his parents, too. He thought. “We became fast friends. I looked up to Shinji… After all, he was always the most passionate. He was known for having loud outbursts and emotional breakdowns easily, so much so that our caretakers cruelly called him ‘insane.’ But I always defended Shinji. I was always there for them whenever he’d have outbursts, even when he’d run away from the orphanage and almost got us all arrested. I was his pillar to lean on…”

Meanwhile, the scene cuts to Shinji during his duel, where he is yelling at his opponent. “I’m here to prove to everyone that a Commoner will win this whole tournament, and make a change once and for all! But I can’t do that without the Commons to work together! Who’s with me?” Shinji shouted. Commoners from the stands and from everywhere cheered, while the Topsiders exchanged nervous glances. Interestingly, Shinji has a bee type deck. “The Commoners are much like these bees; we always come in a swarm, and if you make us mad, we have no choice but to sting back!” Shinji yells. He makes a point about how despite how fragile his cards seemed, no cards were worthless, i.e. no human was worthless.

“When we were kicked out of the orphanage, we made a living together… We fell in love. At least, I

thought that's what it was. I was so overjoyed that the person I valued most loved me back. I loved Shinji so much… Even as a teenager, I still looked up to him. Those early days together were a special time in my life… But I was naive. I didn't notice the signs." Crow told Sylvio.
Back to the duel, Shinji is seen beating his opponent. He stands over his Topsider opponent's injured body, and starts kicking and stomping on him. "This is what will happen to the Topsiders if you don't accept that unity is among us! This guy's cards were trash, and I bet his whole life means nothing! How can a life mean anything if it's spent putting others down?" Shinji pointed out. Right as he said that, he slammed a foot on his opponent's skull, killing him. The Commons cheered loudly, and they started to get violent. The guards stopped Shinji, and were shocked to not find a pulse in the man's body.
'What do you mean?' Sylvio asked. "Well, the first obvious sign was something that was there in front of me: Shinji's intense mood swings. He was always prone to violence and impulse, no matter what people told him. I remember the first time Shinji hurt a Topsider who did nothing to him, he tried to act like I had convinced him… But then came a pattern. Everytime I'd find out that he assaulted a Topsider, he'd try to 'make it up to me' with grand

gestures… Gifts, quality time, kisses…" Crow's voice started trembling. "I can't believe I gave him my innocence." Sylvio's eyes widened in shock. "I know… Pathetic, right?" Crow admitted. Sylvio didn't say anything. "But he kept toying with my emotions. Everytime I'd try to resolve an issue between us, he'd 'make things up' with grand gestures, but keep attacking Topsiders behind my back… It made me resent him, yet I still loved him… But at the same time, I couldn't trust him as much. I realized that being around him was no longer giving me the rush anymore, even when he tried to convince me. One day, things went too far."

Serena and Yuzu are seen dipping their legs in a tub of warm water, while they are reclined in a comfy chair. "This is the life!" Yuzu exclaimed. 'This really is relaxing… Duel Academy never had anything like this.' Serena said. "I guess it would be hard to import spa related items to an island…" Yuzu giggled. Seeing Yuzu laughing made Serena laugh. I'm glad Serena's enjoying herself. I wish that she got to have these experiences when she was younger. But at the same time, I'm glad that she can do it with me.

"What happened?" Sylvio asked. 'On that day, Shinji was so busy trying to murder a Topsider that he didn't even notice that one of his kids was about

to die… “Crow said tearfully.” What?’ Sylvio reacted in shock. Crow nodded. “I had to save him because Shinji was sooo busy. I stopped him from killing the Topsider, and that’s when we broke up. I realized then that Shinji cared more about his misguided revenge than his own family. He truly was insane, just like our caregivers said… And since breaking up, Shinji’s been even worse. He never even bothers to be nice to me, and reacts with jealousy whenever he sees me talking to you.” Crow admits. “Shinji’s jealous… Of me?” Sylvio asked. “He’s jealous that you’re so close with me, which has led to him being rude to you. I’m sorry about that.” Crow informed. “No, it’s okay. You aren’t responsible for his behavior.” Sylvio reassured him.
“I wish I had known that years ago… I wasted so much of my life on Shinji. I gave him my blood, sweat, tears, devotion, love, innocence… He didn’t give me anything.” Crow cried, prompting Sylvio to grab his shoulders to ground him, just like what Yuto had done to him. Crow looked up at Sylvio in shock. ‘I know moving on from someone is hard… Believe me, I get it. Sometimes it’s hard to acknowledge that the ones you love aren’t as good as you used to think.’ Sylvio admitted. “You mean…” Crow begins. Sylvio nodded. “My father may have treated me well, but he was awful to other

people…” He explained. Crow stared at Sylvio in silence. “Still, it’s okay to appreciate those people for what little happiness they did give… But ultimately, they were both jerks to us.” Sylvio told him.
“Yeah, I know he’s a jerk. I just wish that he wasn’t a jerk to you.” Crow admitted. “We should just focus on us, not him.” Sylvio responded, and he gave Crow his hand to stand up. Crow took his hand, and they stood up together with their hands on each other’s shoulders, and returned to the room.

67. Bittersweet Send-Off

The episode begins with Shinji being confronted by the other Lancers. “We saw what you did.” Yugo said bitterly. ‘Okay, so?’ Shinji asked. “What do you mean, ‘so?’ You killed a Topsider on live TV!” Yuya shouted at him. “I was trying to make a point.” Shinji responded. “Was making a point worth the death of an innocent?” Yuto questioned. “Please. The Topsiders are far from innocent. They would do the same to me if the roles were reversed.” Shinji countered. It’s getting harder and harder to tell who is truly innocent among the Synchro Dimension… This place is messed up, and they haven’t even been invaded yet. Yuto thinks.

Reiji silenced the arguing. “You shouldn’t have done that, Shinji. You could’ve been arrested… You could’ve gotten all of us arrested.” Reiji warned him. Shinji snorted. ‘I’m not a part of the Lancers, remember? I only came along so that the kids would see Crow and I together. I have my own objectives.’ He snapped. At that moment, Serena, Yuzu, Crow, and Sylvio came back. “What’s going on?” Yuzu asked.

“Shinji killed a guy on TV!” Yuya yelled. ‘What?’

Crow gasped. Shinji turned to Crow. “Don’t even try to stop me! You know I was trying to make a point! You know that we share the same goal.” Shinji shouted at him. “Hey, leave Crow out of this!” Sylvio defended. “Maybe you should get out of our business.” Shinji sneered. Reiji silenced them once again.

The scene changes to show Commoners uniting to start riots and attack policemen and other Topsiders.

Yuzu is called down to duel an unnamed character.

Yuzu beats said unnamed character extremely quickly. The Lancers cheer for her.

It is implied that a day passes, and Yuya recaps that Serena, him, Reiji, and Yuto won their duels. The reason these duels are skipped is because they are minor and would be boring to watch.

The next duel is revealed to be Sylvio vs Yugo. This makes them both sad, as they don’t want to be the cause of each other’s defeat.

The rest of the episode is spent watching the duel. Crow feels conflicted, as he wants to root for Yugo because he’s a Commoner, but he’s found himself becoming closer and closer with Sylvio lately.

Unfortunately, as the duel rages on, Crow realizes that Sylvio is going to lose. No… He can’t lose! I… This makes him run out of the room down to the stands. Crow couldn’t stop himself, as his body

reacted before he could comprehend what was happening. Yuya tries to chase after him, but Reiji stops him.

As Yugo beats Sylvio, they shake hands. “I’m sorry I had to do this to you.” Yugo says somberly. Sylvio nods. “I’m gonna miss you… All of you.” He says, thinking about Crow.

Suddenly, Sylvio hears Crow’s voice calling out to him. “Crow!” Sylvio gasped. Crow embraced Sylvio gently. ‘We’re gonna get you out as soon as we can.’ He promised him. Sylvio and Crow started to feel themselves tearing up, as they didn’t want to let go of each other. “I promise.” Crow said. “I know you will.” Sylvio acknowledged. Crow could see a guard trying to tug Sylvio off of him. He held onto Sylvio tight, wanting to say one last thing to him. “Thank you for everything.” Crow said to him. “Thank you for everything, too.” Sylvio agreed, before being pulled off of his dear friend. Crow watched in despair as Sylvio was taken from him. “Come on man, let’s head back.” Yugo told him, putting one hand on his shoulder. Crow flinched and brushed Yugo’s hand off rudely. Hurt by Crow’s rudeness, Yugo walked behind his fellow Lancer and gave him space as they walked back to the room.

68. Heartbreaking Reveal

The episode begins by showing Gong and Sylvio working hard labor with some other unnamed characters. The atmosphere is dark and gloomy, and Sylvio is already missing his friends. “Our friends will save us once the Friendship Cup is over.” Gong reassures him. “I know.” Sylvio sighed. Is it bad that I want Crow to lose, so that I can see him again? By how slow-paced this tournament’s been going, I don’t wanna wait that long to see him, or the other Lancers… But I know how much winning this means to him.

The scene changes to Yuto and Yuya. “How are you holding up?” He asked. ‘Not great… But Yuzu’s words made me realize that my father wasn’t who I thought. Maybe you’re all right… Honestly, I don’t even know myself anymore.’ Yuya admits. Yuto sat next to him. “I understand. We all were thrusted into a war, put in jail, argued amongst ourselves, and are now watching our comrades be sent to hard labor… Stressful conditions like that can make you question who you are, if you’re doing the right thing.” Yuto explained. Believe me, I get it… More than you’ll ever know. “You seem like a genuinely good person

who still needs to grieve, is all. You've made too much of a habit of suppressing your feelings and being someone else that you've lost your identity." Yuto comments.
"I guess… But why are you being so nice about it?" Yuya asked. 'What do you mean?' Yuto asked. "Well, everyone else seems to not like my father, but you seem to not hate him." Yuto's eyes widened. "I'll admit, I'm not the biggest fan of Yusho, or his beliefs… But he did get one thing right: dueling shouldn't be used as a weapon. Your father actually passed his teachings on to Ruri, who adapted his words into her own interpretation… A more believable, healthier interpretation." Yuto told Yuya. "Oh… So the only reason you don't hate him as much is because your girlfriend is linked with him?" Yuya asked. Yuto didn't comment. "It's okay, I get it." Yuya told him.
"Yuya… I can tell something else is on your mind." Yuto said, seeing the many tissues still on the floor. It took all of his willpower not to impulsively clean up the surrounding area. 'Well, you're not wrong… I confessed to Yuzu, and she rejected me.' Yuya explained. "You… What?" Yuto asked. Yuya chuckled a little. "I know, right? Pretty stupid move on my part." He admitted. "Yuya…" Yuto said in an exasperated tone.

Right on cue, Yuzu came in. “Yuto, you’re gonna want to see this.” She told him. She completely ignored Yuya.
Yuto looked at the TV screen, and was shocked to see that Shay and Dennis were the next to duel. Shay looked at Dennis sadly. “I don’t want to have to send you to the underground, but we’ll get you out later.” Shay told him. Dennis nodded. “You took the words right out of my mouth!” Shay smiled, and Dennis smiled back. Yuto closed his eyes. What unfortunate circumstances… Shay was just starting to open up…
Later, we see Dennis suited up in his turbo dueling outfit. He checks his deck one last time, and the camera zooms in on his Polymerization. “Hey, Dennis!” Shay calls. Dennis quickly hides his deck. ‘Yes?’ He asks. “No matter what happens out there, I’m happy to have met you. I remember you talking to my sister… I hope that we can reunite with her together one day.” Shay comments. “Yes, I look forward to that!” Dennis agrees. Just then, they are called to rev up their engines and begin the duel.
On the TV screen, the Lancers see Shay and Dennis beginning the duel. Be careful, Shay. Yuto thinks.
Later on in the duel, Dennis is forced into a corner, as all of his monsters have been destroyed. Desperate, Dennis reveals a spell card called Chaos Ancient Gear Fusion, which allows him to summon

all the materials for Chaos Ancient Gear Giant by discarding Polymerization and banishing his XYZ monsters. “It feels soooo good to finally duel the way I was supposed to!” Dennis declares with an evil grin. Shay’s expression twists in horror. ‘No way… You’re from Duel Academy…?’ Dennis laughs manically. “Gotcha! None of you saw that one coming! I was the ultimate plot twist all along!” He declares.

Meanwhile, the Lancers are in shock at this revelation. Yuto has the same horrified expression as Shay. Dennis is from Duel Academy? Then… Why was he in Heartland? Why did he talk to Ruri? Yugo and Yuya are also in shock, as they both had really gotten to bond with Dennis. No way is he the enemy now! Yuya thinks. Serena scoffs. “I’ve never liked that guy.”

Dennis is from Duel Academy? How… Why? Why was he such a good faker? Yuzu thinks. She is reminded of Sora and his betrayal, and starts crying. Why do the people I trust keep turning on me? Yuzu thinks of Sora, Yuya, and Dennis. Yuto puts his hands on Yuzu’s shoulders to comfort her, and admittedly, he was doing it to ground himself. “It’s just like Sora…” Yuzu said quietly. Yuto nodded. ‘I’m sorry you have to go through this again.’ He apologizes. “I’m sorry that you and Shay have to

deal with the fact that we all trusted a Fusion User." Yuzu replied. "That wasn't your fault. Shay and I lowered our guards, too." Yuto responds solemnly. Yuzu thinks about how cheerful Dennis seemed, how he made everyone feel better with games. I can't believe we went through Sora, and yet we got fooled again!

Reiji grits his teeth. "It seems as though a snake has wormed their way into the Lancers…" Riley seems to notice Reiji's anger, so she takes his hand in hers.

Still in shock, Shay mutters, "Polymerization…" Dennis smiled at him. "That's righttttt! And guess what? I think you'll be in for even greater shocks when I bring out this monster!" Dennis declares, summoning Chaos Ancient Gear Giant. The crowd gasps, as the monster is huge. Shay and Yuto are completely horrified by the sight of it, and immediately have flashbacks to that same monster destroying buildings in the invasion. Both of their flashbacks are the same: it shows Yuto and Shay fleeing from the giant monster as it marches through the burning city.

'Looks as though you've seen this monster before.' Dennis sarcastically comments. Shay's shock at Dennis' revelation doesn't last long, as he turns to him with pure hatred in his eyes. "You ARE from Duel Academy… You traitor!" He screams out in a

mix of fury and betrayal. The Lancers hear Shay's cry, which makes them feel bad for Shay and motivates them to root exclusively for him. Shay represents how we feel toward Dennis' betrayal… But it probably hurts him and Yuto the most… Serena thinks, looking over at Yuto comforting Yuzu. Crush him to the ground, Shay! She thinks.

Dennis smiles evilly at Shay. "The hunting game has just begun." These words send Shay and Yuto into a sudden state of anger. Shay screams at the sky, which is a chilling sight for the Lancers to watch. Yuzu feels Yuto's grip on her shoulder tighten uncomfortably. "Y… Yuto?" She asks. She can feel he's gone from his normal calming presence to his intense, vengeful presence. It feels like Shay's standing here, not Yuto. She thinks. He eventually lets go, turning away from her. Send him to hell for me, Shay. For the people of Heartland and the Lancers… For all of us. Yuto thought.

69. Despair of the Rebellion

The episode begins with Shay glaring up at the large monster above him. Just seeing the shadow of the monster makes him tremble. “I swear that I’ll never let this loathsome monster rampage again!” He says through gritted teeth. ‘If you could do that, then Heartland would still be whole, right?’ Dennis mocks him. “Shut up!” Shay shouts at him, the pain evident in his voice. He forces Dennis to keep dueling.

I would like to remind the viewer that in the Arc-V universe, there is a 50/50 chance that the loser will sustain some injury, or that the surrounding area will be damaged. That chance goes up to 100% if Fusion, XYZ, or Synchro duelists are involved. While Action duels are also technically dangerous, the other dimension’s duelists have the ability to make pain inflicted by damage REAL. Keep this in mind.

The Lancers and 20,000 people in the crowd are shocked to see the field getting destroyed. Collateral damage is everywhere, and Melissa Trail almost dies from Chaos Ancient Gear Giant’s chains getting thrown toward her. A lot of the audience is terrified, but most of the Commons are cheering at the

violence, which disturbs Crow. Shinji… What have you done? Our objective was unity, not to overthrow the Topsiders and kill them… He thinks.
This scene reminds Yuya and Yuzu of Shay's duel with Sora. This feels all too familiar… Yuya thinks. Why is Shay always the one exposing traitors in such a heartbreaking fashion? Yuzu wonders.
Shay's Revolution Falcon breaks the glass protecting the Topsiders' booth, which makes them all run in panic. Melissa Trail notices this, and some of the audience is horrified by how dangerous the duel has become.
"Still hanging on?" Dennis asks. 'No matter how much I am cornered, I will survive. I will CRUSH YOU WITH MY IRON WILL AND STEELED STRENGTH!' Shay yells at him. "Your spirit is admirable… I bet you learned that from the Spade Branch, didn't you?" Dennis says. "How the hell do you know that?" Shay asks. "Oh, I know a loooot about you. I'll tell you allllll about it." Dennis remarks.
"Creep. Why is he saying he knows everything about Shay?" Yugo remarks. No one answers. Dennis knows about the Spade Branch's motto…? The one that Shay goes by? Yuto wonders.
"Y'know, I was once a citizen of Heartland City. I was an apprentice of Yusho Sakaki, and I dreamed

of being a dueltainer just like him. I still do. Unfortunately, I also had to follow my orders from the Professor. I had a certain someone that I needed to find… And one day, when you and your little friends gathered to watch Yusho, I found HER. By the time I talked to her, I knew that the fun and games were over. By the Professor's orders, I greenlit the invasion once I found Ruri Obsidian." Dennis explained.

A flashback ensues, where Dennis arrives at the destroyed city. A portal opens, and a cloaked Yuri appears. "You kept me waiting." Dennis tells Yuri in a flirty tone. 'Oh hush, dear. Now, did you find the girl?' Yuri asked. "She's with the other survivors in the shelter, waiting to get water." Dennis told him.

The two spot Ruri alone gathering a bucket of water for the survivors. "There she is. Ruri Obsidian, the piece from the XYZ Dimension." Dennis tells Yuri. "She's all yours." He tells Yuri, and immediately runs off. Yuri activates his duel disk, and Ruri notices him. She starts to run, but he chases her down an alleyway and corners her.

'What? Weren't you enjoying our little game of tag?' Yuri asks her, smiling creepily. Ruri said nothing, and activated her duel disk. "Fine, fine! If you won't come along willingly, I'll force you! But if you win, you can do whatever with me." Yuri tells

her. Ruri says nothing. “I’ll take your brooding silence as a yes.” He responds.
“Ruri Obsidian… Your sister… The one that I needed to locate to greenlight the invasion of your hometown.” Dennis concluded. If Shay was angry before, that didn’t compare to how po’d he was now.
“You $%!” Shay yelled.
Meanwhile, everyone is in shock at Ruri being mentioned. Yuzu and Serena notice how Yuto’s face is a mix of despair and hatred. Poor Yuto… Yuzu thinks. Ruri… So that’s Yuto’s girlfriend? What if she was taken by the same creep that took Rin? Yugo wondered. He was surprised to see the look on Yuto’s face at the mention of Ruri.
“So you targeted my sister? How could you?” Shay screamed at Dennis. Shay has a flashback of him and his sister together, and it’s mostly a montage of still images of him and Ruri looking happy. ‘I was just following orders. Believe me, I wish I could’ve been a Heartland performer forever, but my duty came first.’ Dennis told him. “If Ruri is at Duel Academy, then… What the hell are you all going to do to her? If you harm her anymore I swear I’ll…”
Dennis interrupts him. “I don’t know. The Professor doesn’t keep me in the loop! But if you really want to save Ruri that badly, then why not just hurry over to Duel Academy instead of wasting my time here?

After all, didn’t you declare that you’d save her, even if you had to do it alone?” Dennis taunted him.
“I will. I’ll crush you and your hellish comrades who sent my people to death and captured my sister.” Shay declared.
Meanwhile, Yuto says out loud, “his name will be added.” Serena looks at him in confusion. ‘To what?’ She asks. “To the list of people who deserve suffering for their actions. It’s time for Dennis to feel the agony my people suffered. The blood from my people on his hands will be what drags him to hell.” Yuto said through gritted teeth. The Lancers all glanced at Yuto in a mix of surprise and sympathy. I’m not used to seeing Yuto so angry… Serena thinks. Man, Yuto’s been mad at me before, but not like this! Yugo thinks, which is directly in contrast to Serena’s thought.
“Then I’ll kill you all! No matter how many of you scum I have to kill, I’ll do it for Ruri!” Shay shouted at Dennis. Yuto tensed as he heard this. The Fusion Warriors deserve death for all the deaths that they caused.
“You Fusion scum built the ultimate war machine, so I’ll take it down with my own! Dauntless falcon, hoist up the flame of anger, and become the flash of light that sears the land to ash! Rank-Up Xyz Evolution! You’re clear for take-off! Rank 8! Raid

Raptor — Satellite Cannon Falcon!” Shay yells, as his new monster is summoned.
Shay gets a flashback of him seeing his comrades get carded by three shadowed duelists. “No! Please!” He hears them scream, as they are enveloped in purple light. Shay hears the laughs of the duelists, and looks on in horror as cards fall to the ground.
‘I will crush you to the ground for my comrades who were hunted in cold-blood and sealed in the graveyards of cards!’ Shay announces. “Incinerate the rage of the hunted!” Shay declares, as his monster prepares its canons to strike five times. “This first strike, is for the destruction of my home, and how your people have permanently ruined the climate!” Shay yells, and fires the cannon. “The second strike is for all the innocents your people murdered, who’s last moments were ones of fear and hatred!” He says. “The third strike is for my sister, Ruri, who was the best sister I could ask for!” Shay screams out. “The fourth strike is for my best friend, Yuto, who had to endure everything by my side! I know that I can be a lot to handle, and he had to handle me by himself, along with losing Ruri! So feel the pain and rage of my best friend!”
Yuto is surprised to be given a shout out, and the Lancers all look at him, as if they’re expecting him

to say something. All he manages to say is, “Shay…”
Yuto turns to Yuya, and says, “do you understand now? The horrors Duel Academy has done to us? Things like that can never be healed, no matter how hard you try to fix it with your father’s entertainment. His beliefs will only get you killed in a war like this.” Yuya’s eyes widen in shock, and he starts to cry. Not from Yuto’s harsh words, but from guilt, knowing that he is right. I know that I can’t use his beliefs, but what do I do? Yuya thinks. He turns and notices that all the Lancers appear to be crying, except for Declan. Even Riley!
‘And now… This fifth strike is for me! For all the weight I’ve had to carry, and the pain of losing so many!’ Shay yells, and this strike reduces the Chaos Ancient Gear Giant’s attack to 500. “Thus, my final attack is for everyone from Heartland! The despair of the innocents, my family, comrades, and friends! Feel the hatred of Heartland’s people!” He shouted, as he declared his actual attack.
We see the Satellite Cannon Falcon reach all the way to outer space, and fires its cannon. “Bear the feelings of the hunted and die! Eternal avenge!” Shay screams, as the green blast of light obliterates Chaos Ancient Gear Giant and the impact causes Dennis to go flying off his motorcycle as he loses.

The Commons cheer at the violent blow.
Melissa Trail declares the winner, and observes the devastating wreckage of the track.
Shay gets off of his motorcycle, and walks up to Dennis who is lying on the ground. He straps his duel disk on and says, “I hope you enjoy the fate that your people bestowed onto us!” He attempts to card Dennis, but he can’t. ‘Why can’t I card you?’ Shay asks in anger. “Declan! Declan sabotaged my disk!” Shay realizes. He decides to resort to beating Dennis to death since he can’t seal him into a card, but guards grab Shay and force him to let Dennis go.
Back with the Lancers, Yuzu says, “if Dennis’ mission was to find Ruri… Does that mean he joined the Lancers to kidnap Serena and I?” Everyone realizes that Yuzu is right, which makes them shiver.
Serena notices that Yuto is breathing heavily and putting his hands on his shoulders. What’s happening to him? Serena wonders. She knows it isn’t good. She rushes over to him and asks if he needs something. “A cool cloth.” Yuto responds. She notices that he’s sweating bullets. She runs to the bathroom to get him a washcloth. “Hey, maybe you should lie down…” Yuzu tells him, and grabs his hand to guide him to his room. Unlike Serena, Yuzu gets what’s happening. Did the memories Shay

and Dennis invoke within Yuto cause him to have a panic attack? She wonders.
Meanwhile, Dennis is taken away on a stretcher, and Shay enters the room. “Where’s Yuto?” He demands. Yuya points to his room solemnly. Shay notices that everyone appears to have been crying after his duel. “I’m sorry you all had to see that, but I did what had to be done.” Shay said, and pushed past Yuya.
Shay enters the room to see Yuto lying on his bed with a cloth on his forehead and Serena and Yuzu on standby. “What happened?” Shay asked with visible worry for his best friend. ‘He had a panic attack after your duel.’ Yuzu informed him. That’s what that was? Serena realized. She glanced over at Yuto, who was normally so calm and composed. I can’t believe my people did that to him… She thought, her eyes tearing up. I can’t handle this anymore! Serena runs out of the room. “Serena!” Yuzu yells after her.

70. Origins: Shay Obsidian Part 1

The episode begins with a 16 year old Shay getting ready for school. “Hey, Ruri! We’re gonna be late!” He yells. ‘Alright!’ She tells him. She comes down the stairs. “Bye, mom and dad!” She yells up the stairs. “Bye you two!” The unnamed parents who never make an appearance say to their more plot relevant kids. Ruri takes her brother’s hand. “You ready?” He asks. She smiles and nods, which makes him smile.

On the way to school, Ruri notices a baby bird that’s fallen on the ground. “I gotta help it!” Ruri insists. ‘Ruri, you’re gonna make us late!’ Shay tells her, but it’s no use. She’s already crouched over the ground and picked up the bird with the ends of her dress. Ruri carefully puts it back up in the nest, making sure not to touch the bird. “There! Safe now!” Ruri exclaims happily. Shay face palms. “You’re too kind. One of these days your kindness is gonna bite you.” He tells her. “I’d rather that than indirectly harm someone!” Ruri insists, and takes her brother’s hand. He ruffles the top of her head affectionately. “Come on, let’s go to school.”

At school, they are put into a group with Yuto Ikari. “Hey, I’m Shay Obsidian, a second year student.” Shay introduces himself. ‘And I’m his sister, Ruri! I’m a first year student just like you!’ Ruri introduces herself. Yuto nods. “It’s nice to meet you…” He said timidly. “Welcome to the Spade school!” Shay says with enthusiasm, and shakes Yuto’s hand. He can tell Yuto was taken aback by this action, but shakes his hand in return. “So delicate… And to think these hands played a deck full of knights!” Shay teased. “Yeah, I know.” Yuto said, looking down quietly. Ruri giggled at this.

Later that day, we see Shay in the same class as Yuto. “C’mon, man! You gotta feel the passion in your play!” He encourages, lightly punching Yuto’s shoulder. ‘Passion… In my play?’ Yuto asks. “Well, yeah. You know the motto here? ‘Steeled strength and iron will shows the true strength of a duelist?’” Shay asks. “I’ve heard of it.” Yuto admits. “Well, to keep up here, you’ve gotta feel it in your blood!” Shay says enthusiastically. “Thanks, I’ll try.” Yuto says to him.

We see Shay and Ruri talking to Kaito, Sayaka, and Allen later after school. “We met this guy named Yuto Ikari… He seems really cool! He’s a crazy strong duelist, but he’s really humble about it!” Shay raves to them. ‘So, not like you and I?’ Kaito asks

with a smile. “Nope!” Shay says. “Heyyyyy!” He realizes. “Yuto’s really sweet! I think you all would like him.” Ruri tells them. “Not as sweet as you, I’m sure.” Saya teases. “Actually, he’s pretty close.” Ruri admits. “Wow! That’s crazy! Nobody’s as nice as you!” Allen reacts in shock. “Well, I’d like to meet him sometime.” Kaito tells Shay. “Same here.” Allen says. “Maybe I’ll introduce you all sometime.” Shay says.

Later, we see Shay, Ruri, and Yuto hanging out together as a trio after school. “So Yuto… Do you have a favorite Duel monsters card?” Shay asks. ‘Hmmm… I don’t know. It would be unfair of me to pick favorites… My knights all have their roles to play in the deck.’ Yuto muses. This guy really likes knights… Shay thinks. “If I had to choose, I’d choose my Assembled Nightingale, because it combines the strength of the nightingales before it. It’s like they’re working together to make it more powerful!” Ruri explains. “Wow, that’s more in-depth than what my answer was gonna be. I was just gonna say Vanishing Lanius because I can summon it and other monsters easily.” Shay admitted. They all laughed at this.

In a later scene, we see Shay hyped at school with Yuto. “Yuto! The Spade Branch is going to have the annual tournament with the Clover Branch!” Shay

tells him. ‘Oh, cool.’ Yuto responds. “I know! And I get to duel Kaito again! It’ll be epic!” He says excitedly. “By the way, I’ll have to introduce you soon!” Shay tells him. Yuto agrees to this.
Next, in-between the tournament, we see Shay and Ruri introducing Yuto to their Clover Branch friends. “This is Kaito Tenjo, the guy you’re gonna see me beat soon!” Shay announces. ‘We’ll see about that.’ Kaito cooly responds, and he smiles at Yuto. “This is Sayaka Sassayama.” Ruri tells Yuto. “Hi! Ruri’s been telling me about you.” Saya says. “Uhhh… Thanks?” Yuto reacts. “Yup! He’s a keeper!” Saya whispers to Ruri. This goes over his head. “I’m Allen Kozuki!” Allen says. Yuto dips his head politely. “Wow, he really is nice!” Allen remarks.
We see the friend group hanging out at a restaurant. “So Yuto, any thoughts on trains?” Allen asks. ‘Convenient.’ Yuto responds seriously, not understanding it’s a joke. “No, he means his deck archetype.” Saya tells him. Allen hands Yuto his deck to look at. “Yeah, your deck is really good.” Yuto compliments him. “Can we see yours?” Saya asks him. He nods and shows them all. “Woah! I did not expect someone of your type of personality to have a deck full of edgy, scary-looking ghost knights!” Allen remarks. “Did you know about

this?” Saya asks Ruri. “I’ve already seen it.” Ruri confirms. “Well, it’s definitely unique. I’ve never seen so many traps and spells in one deck. Do you just draw all spells and traps and just set your whole hand?” Kaito asks. “Pretty much.” Yuto says, smiling. “There’s gotta be some catch, right?” Allen asks. “I guess you’ll see when you watch me duel.” Yuto tells them. “Awwww come on! I don’t want to wait! But I don’t wanna read this gigantic box of text either!” Allen complains. They all laugh at this.
The scene changes to Kaito and Shay’s duel, which takes up the entire rest of the episode. It’s a pretty epic duel, and Kaito and Shay exchange some friendly rivalry banter. The episode ends with Kaito barely winning, and they shake hands. It always amazes me how many crowds our duels draw in… But honestly, as nice as their support is, I just like to focus on my duel. Entertainment isn’t what matters; only steeled strength and iron will wins the duel!

71. Origins: Shay Obsidian Part 2

The episode begins with Shay and his friend group watching Yusho Sakaki entertain. He notices Ruri talking to a ginger haired duelist. “This is one of the teachers at the Clover Branch, Yusho Sakaki. He believes in dueling to be used for joy and he trains duelists to become dueltainers.” Saya tells him. Shay smiles at her. ‘Are you wanting to be a dueltainer?’ He asks. She nods. “I wanna be more confident and enjoy myself in duels more!” Saya explains. “Well, that’s a very admirable dream.” Shay tells her. Yusho sure is impressive… But it’s not for me.

Later, we see Shay trying to talk to Yuto at school. “Hey man, it feels like you’ve been avoiding me lately since the tournament ended. Did I do something wrong?” Shay asks. “No! Not at all, I’ve just been busy lately!” Yuto tries to protest. Shay doesn’t press further, but he can tell his friend is lying.

We see Shay walking past Ruri and Yuto sitting on the stairs at the park, and notices that Yuto has his hoodie over his head. “Is he okay?” Shay yells

toward Ruri. She nods. “Uh, okay… I guess I’ll leave you two alone…” Shay says, feeling somewhat left out. Yuto’s hanging with Ruri, but not me? What’s going on? Maybe he’s too nice to tell me that he doesn’t like me?

A few days later, Shay finally sees Yuto again when the friend group hangs out. “I don’t like my last name…” Yuto tells them. ‘I guess that’s fair. It means ‘wrath’ and ‘anger,’ and I can’t picture you like that at all! You’re too kind-hearted for that.’ Shay points out. “Yuto Ikari… Nah, you’re right, it doesn’t fit his character.” Allen agrees. “Well, you know…” Saya begins. “He may as well be Yuto Obsidian.” A look of shock spreads across Shay’s face when she says this. He notices Ruri holding a blushing Yuto’s hand. So that’s why he’s been avoiding me lately! “Ohh! Why didn’t you tell me you were dating?” He asked. “I’m sorry… I didn’t want to ruin our friendship.” Yuto apologized. Shay reassured him that it was all good. “It’s fine! I know you’ll be a good partner for my sister! I hope you do become part of the family one day! Then we can go on vacation together and do all sorts of things!” Shay tells him. Yuto smiles.

On an ordinary day, Shay is hanging out with Kaito, Allen, and Saya. Suddenly, Ruri is running toward them. “What’s wrong?” He asks his sister. ‘There’s

giant monsters attacking!' She warns them. "What?" He asks. "We've gotta make sure our family's okay!" Ruri tells them. They all split up.
Unfortunately, back at the house, the house has been completely destroyed. "Where are they?" Ruri asks in panic. Shay tries to look around, but all he can see is the suddenly smoky black sky. "Ruri, I think we should meet up with the others and figure out what's going on." He explains.
The two of them see the large Ancient Gear Monsters and students in jackets coming from portals. They try to avoid them, and find the friend group. "Yuto's been knocked out!" Saya informs them. 'What? What's going on?' Ruri and Shay react in shock, seeing their friend lying on the ground. "Shay, come with me. We have to fight off these invaders." Kaito tells him. "Invaders?" Shay questions. "Yes, they're Fusion Duelists."
With Kaito, Shay witnesses brutal murders and acts of horror that scare him, but he can't hesitate. He fights back with his Raidraptors, killing multiple students and their monsters at once. "Did I… Just?" Shay wonders out loud, his hands trembling. 'I'm sorry my friend, but sometimes there's just no other choice.' Kaito tells him. "How can you say that so calmly?" Shay asked. Kaito looked at him again, his eyes clouded in sadness. "I can't. I have to. The

quicker you adjust the less painful it is.” Kaito advises.

Back at the lair, Shay can’t sleep, as he is constantly hearing the sounds of the Chaos Ancient Gear Giant’s stomping. These Fusion Warriors will pay for what they’ve done to my city! To my family, my friends… He thought of his friend group, who all had changed into more practical outfits, including him. Nothing will be the same anymore… Shay’s expression goes from sadness to pure hatred. I can’t dwell. Just block out the pain by focusing on the objective…

We later see Shay on a squad with Yuto. Shay notices that Yuto is backed into a corner by some Fusion Duelists. He offers them the chance to surrender, but they don’t oblige. Yuto summons Dark Rebellion, and the impact of the attack sends the duelists headfirst into debris. Shay sees Yuto walk over toward the duelists, and sees that their heads are bleeding. At this sight, Yuto starts to have a panic attack in the middle of a battlefield. Shay protects him, and says, “get it together, Yuto! You have to live, by any means necessary! You can’t freeze up like this every time you kill someone!” His words kept Yuto focused for the time being, as he was running on adrenaline. Shay’s heart breaks at the thought of people as kind-hearted as Yuto and

Ruri having to be forced into this war. I wish they didn't have to be subjected to this… I want to fight for them. I can handle it, but they can't…

We see a montage of Shay and Yuto working together to kill many duelists. Notably, Yuto tries his best not to kill them, but only does so if he has too. Shay on the other hand, doesn't even try to be cautious. Die, $%#&! Suffer what my people have gone through by your hands! Shay brutally massacres many Duel Academy students, so much so that he starts to become desensitized to it. Yuto has begun to adjust to killing to survive, as he always fights with a similar level of rage as Shay. However, he notices that while Yuto never shows any emotion on the battlefield, he has overheard him and Ruri up at night crying about it.

A timeskip happens, where the Duel Academy soldiers have finally stopped invading. Kaito, Shay, and Yuto are sent out to guard the remains of Heartland while Allen, Saya, and Ruri are sent to help the homeless. Shay doesn't get to see his friends nearly as often, especially Ruri, who is constantly juggling multiple jobs at once.

Shay's final interaction with Ruri is this: "Shay, be careful out there." Ruri warns her brother. He snorts. 'They're the ones who should be careful of me.' He tells her. "Please. I don't want to lose you, too." Ruri

tells him. Shay lets out an exasperated sigh. “Alright, fine. I’ll be careful.” He says, as he heads out. That’s the last interaction he has with Ruri for a while, until realizing she has gone missing.

72. Origins: Shay Obsidian Part 3

The episode begins with Shay frantically asking around for his sister. “Ruri?” He yells out.
Shay eventually goes to tell Yuto after he informs his friend group. “Yuto! Yuto!” He calls out. ‘Shay? What’s wrong?’ Yuto asks urgently. “It’s Ruri… She’s gone missing!” Shay tells him, fear in his gaze. Shay could see a small hint of fear on Yuto’s face, which made his stomach drop. Shay knew how much Yuto loved her. “I haven’t seen her in a while. Maybe she went out to fetch water?” Yuto reasons. Shay shook his head. “I’ve already talked to the resistance. They said she went to fetch water, but never came back.” Yuto’s eyes widened in shock; this time, he didn’t even try to hide the look of desperation in his face.
The days pass, and nobody can find Ruri. As more and more days pass, things start to look bleak. Shay notices Yuto taking it pretty hard, as he has stopped doing his duties and has gone to hide away. I knew he would fall apart without Ruri… There’s only one thing I can think of that can keep him motivated… Shay thought.

One day, Shay enters a broken down Spade Branch to see Yuto looking at the torn up walls. This place… It's nothing like how it used to be… "Hey, I know what will make you feel better." Shay suggested. Yuto turned to Shay immediately. "Getting revenge… Take your sorrow, pain, and hatred out on Duel Academy. It'll numb you out. I suspect they're the ones who took Ruri away, anyway." Shay told him. Yuto readily agreed to this, and he looks more depressed than we've ever seen him.

We see a montage of Shay leading Yuto to attack random Duel Academy students ruthlessly. Yuto joins in, desperate to cope with the pain of being separated from Ruri. Shay always killed the students with his monsters, or by carding them. Yuto joined in, and started killing the students with Shay.

However, one day, things changed. After seeing a poster of Yusho Sakaki, Yuto and Shay react differently. "That traitor. He spreads the message of joy and to always smile no matter what, but then goes and abandons us in our greatest time of need?" Shay says, punching the wall. Yuto, however, looks at the poster in shock, as he remembers Ruri's words to him. 'Shay… Ruri wouldn't want this. She wouldn't like seeing us act like this in response to her absence. Needlessly killing so many… What

have we done?’ Yuto asks, looking down at his hands. “I’ve told you before, you just have to numb it out. It’ll make things easier. Being too kind will only make you freeze up from dilemmas, and you’ll waste precious seconds trying to decide.” Shay argued. Yuto shook his head. “I’m sorry Shay, but I can’t do this anymore. It would be a curse in Ruri’s honor to continue this killing spree. From now on I’m going to try to follow her words.” Yuto vowed. “You’re going to get yourself killed! Wait!” Shay called out, a hint of desperation in his voice.

Later that day, Yuto witnesses Shay brutally attack a tall Duel Academy duelist with a red coat after losing. The duelist reveals that they have a knife hidden, and slashes into Shay’s face, making a scar. Shay manages to take the knife, and stab the Duel Academy duelist in the neck, making them bleed out. “Shay! No!” Yuto calls out. Shay ignroes Yuto’s cries, and cards the duelist.

‘That was too far… Stabbing them like that, and then using the way of our enemy?’ Yuto chastised. “There’s no going too far in war, Yuto! I’m just doing what needs to be done!” Shay insisted. “What good was killing this man so brutally for?” Yuto asks. “To get one step closer to Ruri! Don’t you want to save her?” Shay asks. Yuto closes his eyes. “You know I do… But this isn’t how we go about

this.” He tells Shay. “I’m going to save Ruri, with or without your help! To get her back, there’s a high chance that we’ll have to slaughter every duelist at Duel Academy. Can you handle that?” Shay asked. “I… Don’t know…” Yuto admits. “Well, if it’s the only way to get Ruri back, could you do it? I thought you loved her? Don’t you remember how those monsters wrecked our home and killed so many innocents?” Shay yelled at him. This triggered something in Yuto. “Fine! I can do it! I can kill everyone at Duel Academy to get Ruri back!” He shouted. Shay nodded. “That’s more like it.”

A few days later, Saya gathered her remaining friend group for a meeting. “Hey… It’s been a while… Are you alright?” Saya says, addressing Yuto. ‘No.’ He responds curtly. “Hey, you don’t have to be so rude!” Allen yelled at him. “What do you want, Saya?” Shay asked in annoyance. Saya was surprised by Shay’s attitude toward her. “Just let her speak.” Kaito told Shay. “Umm, please don’t get mad at me when I tell you this… Just know that I regret my decision every single day and already hate myself enough…” Saya said. “Of course we won’t hate be mad.” Yuto told her politely. “No promises.” Shay said, which elicited a glare from Allen and Yuto.

“Uh, well… I watched Ruri get kidnapped… And I

was too scared to do anything, so I didn't intervene." Saya finally admitted. Yuto and Shay were deeply shaken by this. 'Why wouldn't you intervene?' Shay demanded, running up to Saya as if he were about to punch her. Kaito held Shay's arm back. "I know I made a terrible mistake… I'm an awful friend, and I should've been the one to get kidnapped, not her!" Saya cried. Yuto narrowed his eyes at her. "Do you know what the person who captured Ruri looked like?" He asked. "He had a robe on, and his face looked so much like yours… But I know it wasn't you. He had pink hair." Saya described. "Do you have any idea where he went?" Yuto asked. "Probably back to Duel Academy. He went through a portal he summoned that crosses dimensions." She replied.

Shay turned to walk away. "Where are you going?" Yuto asked. 'Isn't it obvious? I'm going to find Ruri.' Shay yelled. Yuto chased after him. "How do you plan to do that?" He asked. "Interrogate a Duel Academy student." Shay snapped. "Fine… Just know that I'm coming with you. I'm going to find Ruri with you, whether you like it or not." Yuto declared.

Later, we see Yuto and Shay interrogating a Duel Academy student. "Why have you invaded our dimension?" Yuto demands. 'The Professor's

orders… We’re supposed to follow them without question.’ The duelist responds. “Who is this Professor?” Yuto asks. “He’s the ruler of Duel Academy.” The duelist replies. “Does he have any relatives?” Yuto asked. “Come to think of it, I remember him having a son come to Duel Academy island one time… Declan Akaba was his name?” The duelist says. “Where is this Declan Akaba?” Yuto asks. “In the Standard Dimension.” The duelist says before passing out. “Shay, if we capture the Professor’s son, we can use him as a bartering chip in exchange for Ruri.” Yuto tells Shay. Shay nods in agreement.

Yuto and Shay go back to their friends and tell them their plan to get Ruri back. “So… Does that mean you’re leaving right now?” Saya asked. Shay nodded aggressively. ‘Alright, well… The interdimensional capsule is right this way.’ Kaito said, pointing toward the Clover Branch. “Please take care of Shay.” Kaito whispers to Yuto. He nods. “We’ll be back with Ruri, I swear.” Shay declares. Yuto nods, and waves goodbye to the remaining friend group.

73. Realization

The episode begins with Serena leaving the room and Yuzu chasing after her, while Shay and Yuya stay with Yuto. “Serena! Wait!” Yuzu cries out, which makes her stop. ‘I can’t handle this, Yuzu! It’s just all too much! Dennis being a traitor, him trying to kidnap us and take us to Duel Academy, and Shay and Yuto… “Serena paused when she mentioned them.” I feel guilty everytime I look at those two!’ She cries. Yuzu puts her hands on Serena’s shoulders. “Serena, you know you’re not a part of Duel Academy anymore. You don’t have to feel guilty. Even when you were in Duel Academy, you didn’t participate.” Yuzu reassured her. “I wanted to, though! God, I’m such an idiot! My whole childhood was a lie, and I believed hurting their people would bring me purpose! Just seeing Yuto upset made me feel awful! He’s always been there comforting me, but I’m a Fusion user! It doesn’t seem right! What can I do if I break down everytime I see him and Shay? I don’t know what I’m meant to do anymore, Yuzu.” Serena admits. “You are meant to be a part of the Lancers. You’re meant to help stop Duel Academy for Yuto, Shay, and your sakes.

Please understand that nobody blames you…” Yuzu comforts her.
Meanwhile, the next duel is announced. “Next up is Shinji Weber and Yuto Ikari!” Melissa Trail announces. “Uh oh.” Yugo realizes, and he runs into Yuto’s room.
‘Hey guys, we got a problem. Yuto and Shinji are set to duel.’ Yugo bursted in. Yuto is still trying to calm down, so he isn’t ready yet. “No, he can’t duel! I’ll take his place!” Shay quickly said. “No, I’m dueling for him!” Yuya quickly interjects.
Suddenly, Shinji bursts in. “What the hell are you doing? Get down here, we have a duel!” He yells at Yuto. This makes him panic again, so he doesn’t respond. ‘What are you doing? Didn’t you see that he just had a panic attack?’ Yuya asked. Shinji snorted. “Shut up. It’s the way of this world to duel in the Friendship Cup, and we have to live with it. I have to be the inspiration for the Commons to rise up and overthrow the Topsiders.” Shinji retorted.
Reiji ended up coming in, and declared, “I will be your opponent.” Everyone gasped in shock. Shinji agreed to this, not wanting to argue with Reiji anymore.
When the duel began, Reiji let Shinji take the first turn. Shinji milked this opportunity to tell the Commoners to “rise up” against the Topsiders and

“work together.”
Meanwhile, Jack is seen watching the duel. Finally, a Commoner who gets it. The Commons have to work together to solve their problems, not be divided amongst themselves… A flashback is shown of Commoners fighting in Jack’s youth. To think that the Commoners criticized me for not doing anything, when they just want an excuse to not work together! How pathetic! I know the Commons are better than that. Jack thought.
Reiji ends up beating Shinji in one turn, humiliating him and setting the Commons off on several violent riots throughout the dimension.
This obviously makes Shinji mad, and he curses at Reiji as he is pulled away by the guards.
Yuto is seen to have calmed down, and is talking to Shay. “This wasn’t your fault.” Yuto reassures him. Shay’s face softened. ‘I’m glad you’re alright.’
Meanwhile, Gong and Sylvio are seen still working in hard labor. “Jeez! How long is this stupid Friendship Cup?” Sylvio asks, getting agitated. Gong shakes his head. “I don’t know…” He admits. “I just wanna see Crow again!” Sylvio complains. “Hey, I wanna see our friends, too, y’know.” Gong comments. “Oh! Right, I mean… Yeah, I wanna see all of them. That’s what I meant.” Sylvio quickly says.

Once Reiji, Serena, and Yuzu came back to the room at the same time. “If I’m gonna be honest, I’m kinda glad you dueled Shinji and sent him away.” Crow commented. “I figured as much. Besides, he was getting in the way of our objective.” Reiji told him.
There’s an intermission, so Crow takes this time to hang back in his room to sulk, which is what he has been doing since being torn apart from Sylvio. Why do I care so much about him? We’ve hardly talked much… He has flashbacks to when he and Sylvio opened up to each other. Well, maybe we have… Somehow, I think we understand each other on a better level than any other friendship I’ve had… Plus, I trust Sylvio more than any of these other people. Crow thinks. He pictures Sylvio’s smile, his goofy antics, and stupid stunts he’d do to impress him. Sylvio… Why do I miss you so much? Crow wonders. Lying in bed, Crow thinks about Sylvio more, and he remembers how desperate he felt as Sylvio was torn away from him. Crow squeezed the bed sheets tightly thinking about it. Something between us has changed…
“Yeah, I know he’s a jerk. I just wish that he wasn’t a jerk to you.” I remember. That’s what I said to Sylvio that day, in regards to my ex boyfriend. And he said: “we should just focus on us, not him.” Crow played it back in his mind over and over. He

remembered exactly how Sylvio had extended his smooth, gentle hand out to help him stand up. Crow remembered the exact moment of contact when he accepted, and his hand met with Sylvio's. It was an indescribable feeling… His hand was so gentle, so innocent… as if he hadn't been through much. But it made contact with mine… My hand was rough against his, through years of calluses scraping by to survive. Crow remembered how they had put each other's hand on each other's shoulders.

It suddenly hit Crow like a ton of bricks: it was so obvious! Gosh dang it, I'm falling for that goof. Who am I kidding? I've already fallen!

74. Always Back to You

The episode starts with a new match being announced: Shay Obsidian vs Crow Hogan.
Reiji goes to get Shay and Crow, who are both in separate rooms. “It’s alright, I’m okay now.” Yuto tells Shay, prompting him to leave for his match. I wish I didn’t have to duel Crow… Shay thought to himself, thinking back to when they teamed up and hung out during Yugo’s game tournament. His eyes narrowed in determination. But I have to. If Crow is in my way of my goal, then this is what I have to do.
Meanwhile, Reiji tells Crow that he is up for the next match. He slowly gets up. Shay… I don’t want to fight him. He’s one of the few Lancers that I actually like! And he uses birds, just like me!
Once Crow and Shay are about to take-off, they shake hands. “I’m sorry, but my objective to stop Duel Academy and bring my sister back comes first.” Shay tells him firmly. Crow nods. ‘I get it. I also have something worth fighting for. I have to represent the Commons, and set what Shinji has done straight.’ Crow responds. “No hard feelings?” Shay asked. “Right.” Crow agreed.
The duel takes up most of the episode. It’s certainly

an interesting one, as it's birds vs birds. Shay and Crow are definitely an underrated duo in the canon of Arc-V, so I tried to give them more of a bond in my rewrite.

As the duel continues, the two duelists find each other thinking about their similarities. Shay's persistence and willpower is just like the strength of the Commons… He's certainly a formidable foe. Crow thinks to himself. Crow is one of the few who has steeled strength and iron will… Finally, an opponent I can respect and go all out for! Shay thinks.

Meanwhile, three of Crow's kids are on the overpass watching Crow's duel. They watch Shay and Crow drive under them.

Crow tries to spread the message of the Commons uniting, but unlike with Shinji, he is trying to imply unity among the classes, instead of a coup d'etat.

Unfortunately, the wind gusts created by the two powerful bird monsters cause one of the kids, Tarren, to fall off the overpass. He manages to grip onto Raikiri. "Crow! We have to stop!" Shay yells, and points to Tarren. Crow gasps in shock. 'What are you doing?' Crow asked. "I wanted to watch you duel!" Tarren wailed. Tarren's grip begins to falter, but Shay manages to jump off his motorcycle onto Revolution Falcon and save the boy. The remaining

kids on the overpass cheer. Melissa Trail remarks on the strange situation, and says, “who knew the bad boy had such a soft heart for kids?” Shay rode his falcon to the overpass to drop Tarren off. “You should all find somewhere safer to watch.” Shay tells them. Tarren thanks him, and they run off. Shay flies back down to his motorcycle, which has been on autopilot.

“Hey, thanks for that. I didn’t know you liked kids.” Crow tells him. ‘They remind me of the innocence of Heartland, whose lives were stolen from them.’ Shay admits. “Duel Academy… They’re unforgivable for ruining the lives of so many children…” Crow muses. Shay nodded. “You also have to deal with the Topsiders…” Shay remarks. “We are like two peas in a pod.” Crow admits. With this, they fist bump.

Ultimately, Shay comes out on top. The Commons are dismayed, and start more riots. Shay parks his motorcycle to say goodbye to Crow. “I’ll be back!” Crow promises. Shay nods. ‘I know you will. You have the steeled strength and iron will to do so.’ He tells Crow. “Stay strong, my friend.” Crow says, and they fist bump one last time as he is taken away.

We see the Lancers watching on. Shay’s finally starting to become one of us. Reiji thinks, smiling. He looks at Yuto, who is also smiling. “I’m happy

for him.” Yuto admits. “I am as well. Shay finally seems to be opening his humanity again.” Reiji comments, looking toward Riley.
When Shay comes back, the Lancers cheer for him. “That was awesome, dude!” Yugo says, lightly punching his shoulder. Shay smiles at this. ‘Thanks.’ Riley walks up to Shay shyly. He sees this, and kneels down toward her. “How… Are you able to feel things so strongly?” Riley asked. “I’ve been exposed to too much… I tried to hold back my feelings of regret and sadness to numb the pain, but it just made me feel inhuman. That’s why I always go all out in duels; it’s the only way I know how to process my emotions clearly.” Shay explained. He extended a hand out to the child. “Maybe you and I can learn a thing or two about becoming whole again?” Shay asked. Riley took his hand, and his face softened. They smiled at each other. “You’re already on your way.”
Meanwhile, Gong and Sylvio hear the guards bring in another loser. Sylvio watches, and gasps. “Crow!” He says, tears forming in his eyes. He starts running over toward him. Crow notices, and runs toward him. “Sylvio…” Crow says, as if he was in doubt that he would ever see Sylvio again. The long days of hard work and waiting to see him again ate at Sylvio’s heart. Similarly, the anticipation and

longing to see Sylvio again was finally about to end. The two eventually meet, and they share a loving embrace. Sylvio put his hands against the back of Crow's head, while Crow put his hands against Sylvio's back. Sylvio drew Crow closer by pulling his hands behind Crow's head forward. "Don't ever leave me again." Sylvio cried. Without thinking, Crow grabbed one of Sylvio's hands from behind his head. "I won't." He promised, holding onto Sylvio's hand. He could tell that Sylvio was blushing.

'H… Hey… I know this sounds weird, but can I k…?' Sylvio's question was interrupted by Crow pulling Sylvio's head forward into a kiss. After a few seconds, Crow pulls away, his face red. "Thank you for asking." Crow tells Sylvio afterwards, his eyes tearing up. "Yeah, it's no problem." Sylvio responded, gazing back at Crow. They smiled at each other in silence. "Does that mean that we're now…" Sylvio began. "Yes." Crow whispered breathlessly.

75. Dueling for Fun

The episode begins with Yugo vs Serena being announced. “No…” Yuzu says, starting to tear up. She has gotten close to both Yugo and Serena over her time in the Lancers. “Every one of us is going to be sent away…” She says. “No. We’ll get them back.” Reiji tells her. Serena and Yugo start to head for the door, and they look back at Yuzu sadly.

As Serena and Yugo suit up, Serena catches Yugo staring at her. “Why are you looking at me like that?” She asked. “Sorry… I still sometimes forget that you and Yuzu aren’t Rin. You all look so alike!” Yugo points out. Serena remembered the file from the Professor that she had stolen. Revival Zero… Why did he have that? Why did we all look the same?

The duel begins. We see Roget try to interfere with the duel by turning the tracks around, purposefully trying to knock Yugo off and make Serena win.

“What the heck is going on?” Yuzu wonders while watching the duel.

Throughout the duel, Serena warms up to Yugo’s antics and learns from him that dueling could be used for fun, and not just as a weapon. This is the

first duel that I’ve partaken in that wasn’t for duty or to avenge someone… But for something fun?
Serena ends up winning, much to Roget’s glee. Keeping her safe was key… He thinks. “Win for me!” Yugo says as he gets taken away, much to many of the Commons’ dismay, as now all the Commons in the Friendship Cup have lost.
Serena arrives back at the room, and Yuzu hugs her. Serena hugs her back. “We’re gonna get him back.” Serena tells her with conviction.

76. Compromise

The next duel is Shay vs Yuya.
Throughout the duel, Yuya apologizes to Shay for what his dad did in the XYZ Dimension, and the two finally start to bond.
Shay ends up beating Yuya relatively quickly.
Next up is Yuzu vs Yuto. The two shake hands. This duel lasts the rest of the episode.
“Yuto, no matter what happens to me, I don’t regret assisting you in your mission!” Yuzu tells him during the duel. A flashback occurs when the two of them were in an alleyway, where Yuzu had learned about where Yuto had come from, where her whole world view shattered. Another flashback shows her trying to convince Yuto to take her with him on the Lancers.
‘You’re the one who opened my eyes to everything.’ Yuzu told Yuto. “I’m glad you’re with us. If I had to lose to any Fusion User, I’d want it to be you.” He told her.
Unlike the Shay vs Yuya duel, this duel was a close fight. In the end, Yuto ended up winning. The two shook hands. “Hurry up and win so you can come save me and the others.” Yuzu teased him, and was

taken away. It hurt him a little to see Yuzu being taken away, as she looked a lot like Ruri.
Back in the room, the TV announced something. “The king himself has ordered that he wants to duel the last three remaining duelists! The last three duelists will team up, and if even one of them beats Jack then all three will win. Annnnd we’re tripling the prize money!” Melissa announced. Reiji, Shay, and Yuto looked at each other and nodded. ‘We’re going to win this.’ Shay resolved. “We can finally tell the world about the interdimensional war, and start building up a defense for this place.” Reiji told them. Riley stood and watched them in admiration. “You can come with us.” Reiji told her.
The episode ends with a portal opening, and out comes Sora with the Obelisk Force.

77. Brawl With The King

Pretty much the majority of the episode is Reiji, Shay, and Yuto vs Jack Atlas. It's awesome. But I'm not going to write what happens in the duel because that isn't plot or character relevant.

Meanwhile, the Lancers are mostly together. "So, who did you lose to?" Serena asked Yuzu. 'Yuto.' She said. "Better him than Shay or Reiji." Gong told her. She nodded. "Probably so…" She agreed.

However, while the duel is happening, Roget and Sector Security are seen turning on the Council. "What is the meaning of this?" One of them asks. Roget smiles evilly. "This is my city." He sneers, and Sector Security proceeds to electrocute the Council Members and kills them all.

At the same time, the riots in the city are growing more and more violent. Topsiders are being attacked, even those who weren't doing anything. The two opposing classes look up at the screen, and see that Roget has taken over the city. "My first new law I'm making is that all Common filth must be taken to the Facility." He says. He sends Sector Security into the fight, which just makes the riots even worse. "Change will come!" A Commoner

yells while beating a Sector Security officer to death with a bat.

Also, keep in mind that Sora and Obelisk Force have arrived, so now they're suddenly coming in. Sector Security tries to arrest them, but they get carded instantly.

After a tough fight, the Lancers defeat Jack. Melissa Trail gives them the mic, as they are the new winners. Reiji, Shay, and Yuto talk briefly about how they are humbled, but immediately start warning the viewers about the threat of an interdimensional war. Melissa Trail tries to deny this, kinda giving off the vibe of "there is no war in Ba Sing Se."

Reiji decides to talk to Jack, asking if he believes them. He agrees. "Would you like to become a Lancer?" Reiji asks. "My place is here, but I will assist you in defending this dimension." Jack tells them.

After getting out of the stadium, Reiji soon realizes that Roget has taken over, and Sector Security starts to attack them. They soon figure out that there are riots going on everywhere. "What's going on?" Shay wonders. Reiji decides that the first thing that they need to do is find the underground area the Friendship Cup losers were sent to.

The episode ends with Roget ordering Sector Security to find the Lancers and kill them on sight.

78. Scrupulosity (skroo-pyuh-laa-suh-tee)

The episode starts with the Lancers underground. They suddenly see Reiji, Shay, Yuto, and Riley taking out the guards. “You found us? How?” Yuya asked. “We’ll explain later, let’s get out of here!” Shay tells him. The other losers want to escape, so everyone starts a riot with the guards. Shinji leads a group of Commoners to straight up murder the guards, but the Lancers do their best to refrain from it, even Shay.

They all regroup at Crow’s house. (Except Shinji, of course) “What’s going on up here?” Gong asks Reiji. ‘The city is in chaos. I believe that the Commons are forming a coup d’etat, Roget has killed the Council and taken over, and the Fusion Dimension has started invading.’ Reiji comments. Yuto and Shay are shocked about the invasion part. “Those jerks… I didn’t think they’d arrive so fast.” Shay says with a clenched fist. “So what do we do now?” Crow asked Reiji. “We need to drive away the Fusion Dimension and take back the city. If we hurry, we can stop Roget before the Fusion Dimension causes too much damage. From there, we

can unite the two classes by giving them the same enemy to fight against.” Reiji explains.
From there, Reiji led the Lancers to the late Council’s building. Shay summons his Raidraptor cards to fly everyone up to the top.
Reiji splits up from the group to face Roget by himself. He finds Roget laughing maniacally, and they duel.
The rest of the Lancers fight back against the Sector Security. Riley is surprisingly good at protecting them, as she trips several of the officers.
Crow and the Lancers gets on a broadcast and tells the city about the Duel Academy invaders, and addresses the obvious classism. He shares his hope that the two classes can be united together, and through their shared suffering, can bond. Crow tells a heartfelt story about his childhood, where the Commons weren’t united and the Topsiders ruled everything, and addresses them with some encouragement. Seeing a fellow Commons talk about uniting the two classes instead of straight up murdering the high class makes the Commons realize that they were going too far. Similarly, a lot of the Topsiders are seen fighting against the Obelisk Force and being exposed to the horrors of war, so they are being humbled and are on board with Crow’s message.

Sora sees this broadcast, and recognizes some of the people.
With the Commoners and Topsiders united to fight against the Fusion Dimension, Sector Security realizes “well shit if I don’t wanna face riots from both sides I should probably help” and makes the right choice.
Reiji ends up beating Roget surprisingly quickly, proving that Roget wasn’t that strong despite having a menacing presence. He throws himself off the building in shame after realizing that the Lancers have ruined all his progress. Reiji watches Roget fall in horror.
The Lancers meet up with Reiji, who has crouched on the floor. “What happened?” Yuya asked. “We dueled, and Roget…” He pointed to the break in the glass, which makes them all gasp. “He’s gone… Killed by his own shame.” Reiji tells them.
The Lancers decide to get out of the building and get to the streets, where they can assist the Synchro Dimension’s fight against Duel Academy.
What follows is an epic montage of the Lancers fighting together. Sylvio and Crow pair up of course, as do Serena and Yuzu, Yuto and Shay, and Reiji and Riley. Jack Atlas ends up joining in the fight as well, bringing Commons and Topsiders alike as reinforcements. “If we all band together, we can

drive away the enemy and make steps toward making our city more balanced!" He declares. Everyone lets out a battle cry.

Sora appears in front of them. "It's been too long, Shay." He grins. Right as Shay is about to duel him, Yuto steps up instead. "I'll duel him." He tells Shay. Shay nods. Yuto and Sora begin their duel.

As the battle rages on, it turns into an all-out battlefield. People on both sides are killed, people are carded, and the Lancers accidentally kill their opponents. Gong sheds a tear and prays after the Fusion Warrior he killed was shot into the side of a building. Sylvio breaks down when he sends his opponent falling to their death, prompting Crow to protect him. Blood spills on the battlefield, and Riley starts to get flashbacks as she is reminded of her hometown.

Shay angrily murders the Fusion Warriors like he always does, but with slightly less brutality than normal.

Yuto gets flashbacks to Ruri's words, and thinks about the first time he met Serena, and how she was proof that a lot of Duel Academy were brainwashed victims. How can I save Ruri if I am forced to kill innocents? He wonders. Yuto thinks about how Serena cried at his feet, how she genuinely felt empathy for him and Shay, and how caring she was

towards Yuzu. Yuto looks around him, seeing the streets of the Synchro Dimension have turned into a battlefield. He looks down at his hands and starts to tremble. I can't do it… I can't kill everyone at Duel Academy to save Ruri. I'm not strong enough…

"What's wrong? Thinking about her again?" Sora asked, snapping Yuto back to the present. 'I didn't ask for your concern.' Yuto said back. "Aw… And you know I don't care! Why are you wasting time just standing there? Didn't you want to save your precious girlfriend? Well… It seems like you can't, because you're too soft!" Sora taunted. Yuto's previously conflicted thoughts vanished, as everything in that moment was made abundantly clear. His eyes flashed with anger as he took his turn.

With that, Yuto beat Sora, with his Dark Requiem mauling the boy to death. The chilling screams and cries of Sora pierced the air, making Yuya look at Yuto in horror. "What are you doing?" He screamed. This made Yuto snap out of his rage for a second, and he finally processed what he had just done. Dark Requiem vanished, and Sora lay in a pile of rubble with his body bleeding out. Yuto approached the boy in shock. What have I done? He thought. The light in Sora's eyes slowly faded, and Yuto couldn't help but feel uneasy about watching a kid die, even if he

was a sadist. “You’ll never save… her…” Sora whispered, before dying.

Yuto fell to his knees in front of the dead boy. I can’t do this anymore… I can’t keep killing people like this… I’m too weak to make up my mind. Why does it have to be this way? Why does it have to come down to such extremes? Yuto started to cry. I just want Ruri back!

Yuya approached Yuto from behind. “I know Sora was the enemy… But why did you have to kill him?” Yuya asked. Yuto didn’t answer. He couldn’t find the strength to argue about why he had to resort to such extremes, because he himself didn’t understand why. Shay came over and gave Yuya a hard glare. ‘He was one of the Fusion Warriors who killed our people. That’s a valid enough reason.’ Shay said to him. “Come on, Yuto. You can’t freeze up… You can’t die.” Yuto couldn’t respond to Shay, either. No matter what, I’m either a coward or I’m a terrible person. I can’t decide… I used to be able to make decisions quicker and not freeze up… What changed?

Yuto suddenly pictured the Lancers, and all their antics and how much he cared for them. He could picture them smiling and enjoying dueling, despite willingly volunteering to be a part of the war. They aren’t used to having to kill or be killed, yet…

Somehow, their naivety gives me hope. I want to believe them so badly, but it always just comes back around to this. If I make the noble choice, at best, the enemy will live and I'll just cause more problems. At worst, I die, and I leave the XYZ Dimension with more burdens to bear, and to suffer for longer. If I kill to survive, I'm one step closer to Ruri and saving my home, but… I lose a part of myself each time. I'm not a knight. I wish I could say I was honorable, but I'm not. I can't kill someone in revenge for killing people when I'm doing the same. And if I can't decide between my extremes, then I'll die… And I can't afford that. But I also can't stop looking at the blood on my hands…
The episode ends with Yuya and Shay trying to tell Yuto two distinct philosophies, as it begins to rain. The blood from Sora's body washes onto Yuto, making his vision blurry. He passes out.

79. Obscurity

The episode begins by showing the rain still pouring on the blood-soaked battlefield. After seeing Sora dead, the remaining Obelisk Force members retreat into a portal.

The Commoners, Topsiders, and Sector Security cheer in their victory. The Lancers don't, as they observe the horrors around them. "Yuto!" Serena notices Yuto passed out and runs over. 'What happened to him?' She asks. "I don't know. Yuya started accusing him and I tried to comfort him, but… I think he just had an overload. I was afraid this would happen to him." Shay told her. "What do you mean?" Serena asked.

"Yuto's the kind of person who stresses about doing the right thing; he always has. Even before the invasion, he'd be ridiculously nice… So you can imagine how he can barely function or focus during times of war, when you have to kill to survive. The only reason he's even still alive is because I try to remind him of his mission, but he's just too kind… I worry that that might be his undoing." Shay explains. Serena gasps as she looks at Yuto's unconscious form. "Yuto can't handle the dilemmas

of war. He doesn’t have the stomach for it. Most of us didn’t, but we were forced to. I thought he finally understood, but he always goes back. Yuto has a low opinion of himself, but I wish he could understand that he’s not a bad person.” Shay says, a look of sadness in his eyes. Everyone else in the Lancers either seems to be too naive to understand, or are like Shay and I… Serena realizes.

We see a montage of Commoners, Topsiders, and Sector Security members bonding with each other over shared loss.

Suddenly, in the aftermath of the fight, the citizens of the Synchro Dimension start to chant Jack’s name. Jack turns to see the crowd. “King Jack! King Jack! King Jack!” They chanted. Jack and the Lancers came to the realization that the people were chanting for Jack to become the ‘king’ of the dimension and to restore order. “I humbly accept. I will bring equality to the city, and restore the economy!” Jack announced. Everyone cheered.

Reiji understood that this meant that Jack couldn’t become a Lancer. “Leaving so soon?” Jack asked. Reiji nodded. ‘With you as the new king, our business is settled here. We have to continue our objective.’ He told him. Jack nodded. “Alright. It was a pleasure meeting you. Come back someday!” Jack told him. “I’m sure we will.” Reiji agreed.

The Lancers regrouped. Despite the cheers and yells of triumph around them, none of them felt happy. They had been exposed to the horrors of war, and some were even forced to kill. The mood was a somber one. Yuzu was crying on Serena's shoulder, and Crow was trying to comfort Sylvio. Gong stood there with a face of horror, as he was still processing what he had done. Yuya stood frozen, replaying the events in his head. Sora… I don't care what you did, but you didn't deserve that…

"Let's all head back to Crow's house to grab our stuff… Then we'll activate the cross dimension setting on our duel disks and head to the Fusion Dimension…" Reiji announced. 'Wait.' Shay interrupted. "Yes?" Reiji asked. "Can we… Can we head to the XYZ Dimension first?" He asked. "I thought you didn't want to come back until your objective was fulfilled?" Reiji questioned. "I know, but I think that if we brought the rest of the Resistance with us then we'd have a better chance at destroying Duel Academy." Shay explained. Reiji nodded. "Alright, that's fine. We can come up with an attack strategy from there." He told Shay.

Back at Crow's house, Serena grabbed her bag. However, she accidently grabbed it by the wrong side and her stuff came falling out. "Oh! I'll help you!" Gong said, picking up her things. 'Oh…

Thanks.' Serena said. Reiji entered the room, and happened to notice Serena's Revival Zero file. "Serena… How did you obtain this?" He asked, his eyes wide in shock. "I stole it from one of the Professor's chambers." Serena admitted. Reiji pulled out the same exact file from his bag to show her. "How do we have the same file?" Serena asked. "I'm not sure. My father must've made multiple copies. Would you mind if we all read through them?" Reiji asked. Serena agreed.

The Lancers gathered to read the files. "Okay, first off, why the heck is Serena's face on the cover?" Yuya asked. 'Hey! An even better question is why the creep who took Rin is on the cover with her?' Yugo asked. Yuto, who had since woken up, noticed that he had pink hair. "That's the person who took Ruri!" Yuto declared angrily. "Yuri Kiomi." Reiji read. Yuya shivered. "Yuri's smile in this picture is so… Unsettling." He admitted. "What did you expect a guy who kidnaps girls to look like?" Yugo asked. "Can we move on, please?" Yuzu insisted. Reiji nodded, and turned the page.

The first page instructed how to Pendulum summon, which shocked everyone. "How??? I'm the one who invented Pendulum summoning! How could the Fusion Dimension know about this?" Yuya asked. Reiji checked the date. 'How strange. This file

seems to have been made before your duel with the Sledgehammer.' Reiji says. "What?" Yuya gasps. "So… Yuya didn't invent Pendulum summoning?" Gong asked. "But… I haven't seen anyone from this dimension use it!" Yuya exclaimed. "No one from the XYZ dimension uses it." Shay says. "I've never heard of it until reading this." Serena said. There was a confused silence.

The next few pages explained every summoning method, which was also shocking to the group. "What did my father want with all the summoning methods?" Reiji mused out loud. 'Maybe he wanted to be a better duelist. I mean, you use all the summoning methods.' Yugo pointed out. "Do you really think that a dictator like him would even need to learn this? He has a whole freaking army and school!" Serena argues. "I'm just saying." Yugo said back. "Whatever the case, the Professor's a smart guy… Knowing all these summoning methods…" Gong says.

Perhaps the most shocking part of the file were the pages near the end; each one had a picture of one boy and one girl from each corresponding dimension. "What the…?" Yuya reacted, seeing his and Yuzu's faces on one of the pages. 'It even has our names?' Yuzu wondered. "Creepy." Sylvio said out loud. "All it has is our pictures?" Yuya asks.

Reiji shook his head. “Look, it says: ‘Z counterpart Yuya Sakaki. R counterpart Yuzu Hiiragi.’” Reiji pointed out. “What do the letters stand for?” Crow asked. “I’m not sure. I’ve read through this multiple times but the file never addresses what they stand for.” Serena admits. Yuzu is unnerved by the sheer creepiness of this file even existing.

They turn the page, and Shay and Yuto gasp in shock. “Z counterpart Yuto Ikari… And R counterpart Ruri Obsidian?” Shay yells out in confusion. ‘Why would the Professor even want two XYZ Dimension citizens if he invaded our home?’ Yuto pointed out. “Okay, this is really really weird…” Sylvio admitted. “Oh god, does that mean Rin and I are next?” Yugo asked. Reiji turned the page.

Sure enough, Yugo was right. “Z counterpart Yugo Damare and Rin Yukimi.” Reiji read out. ‘How could someone in the Fusion Dimension even cross dimensions to take these photos and learn all your names?’ Crow wondered. Nobody responded. “Those are all the pictures.” Reiji remarked.

“Why do all the girls look the same, and all the guys look the same?” Yuzu asked. ‘They aren’t as identical as they once were, for whatever reason.’ Yuto admitted. “Yeah, it’s clear to see the difference. The only similarity is the face shape.” Shay agreed.

“But still! Why are the faces the same?” Yuya wondered. “This can’t be a coincidence.” Gong said. “Of course it isn’t. Why would my father have a file of this if there wasn’t a bigger secret behind it?” Reiji remarked. “Well, we know that the Professor captured Ruri and Rin, and tried to take Serena and I… So what does he want with us?” Yuzu commented. “Also, why hasn’t he tried to kidnap any of the guys?” Yuya asked. “My father was a scientist and a businessman… He probably has a reason for it.” Reiji mused. “We just don’t know the reason.” Sylvio finished. “Correct.” Reiji replied.

“Why does every pair of counterparts have to be couples?” Yugo wondered. Yuzu, Serena, and Yuya gave him a hard look. ‘Yuya and I aren’t together!’ Yuzu yelled at him. “I’m not associated with this creep!” Serena said, pointing at Yuri’s picture. “Okay, okay! I meant to say ‘most!’” Yugo corrected himself. “Half doesn’t equate to most.” Yuto remarked. “Oh whatever!” Yugo snapped.

“Wait, there’s one last page.” Serena pointed out. They turned to the final page. ‘Once all the R pieces are put together, we can return to the origin, and all will be well. She will be brought back. The Z pieces must never be brought together, or else everything will be destroyed.’ Reiji reads. “What the heck does that mean?” Yugo asks. “Wait… So if Yuzu and the

girls are brought together, then another girl will be brought back?" Yuya asks. "If the guys are brought together, everything will be destroyed? Why?" Yuto asks. "If I had to guess… My father seems to be implying that he wants to sacrifice the girls to bring back something… Or more specifically, someone. And he doesn't want to sacrifice the boys because it will bring something bad." Reiji deduces. "Some creepy old guy wants to sacrifice us?" Yuzu asked. "It seems so." Reiji says calmly. "So… The point is, we have to make sure Duel Academy doesn't get Serena and Yuzu." Yuya concludes. "For now. I'm sure we'll learn more later." Reiji says.

The episode ends with everyone standing around in a circle, preparing to activate their duel disks to teleport to the XYZ Dimension. Yuto and Shay have grim expressions on their faces, anticipating all the destruction around them. "Alright, I'm going to countdown from 10 once again. Then, you will press the button on your duel disks." Reiji tells them. We get a shot of everyone's faces once he is counting down, and they all press the button at 0. They all disappear into purple light.

80. A Despairing Wasteland

The episode begins with the Lancers waking up in the XYZ Dimension. Yuya immediately coughs and waves at the air. “The air quality is terrible here!” He says. ‘That’s what happens when several Ancient Gear Monsters pollute the air for months on end.’ Shay responds. “Well, it isn’t that much worse than the underground facility where the losers of the Friendship Cup were sent to.” Crow remarks. Yuzu notices that Yuto and Shay put their masks back on. So that’s why they had masks on when I first saw them… Yuzu realizes. “We can lead you to the Resistance base.” Yuto tells them. Reiji nods. The Lancers look around at the damage done to the city, and are in shock. I knew it would be bad… But… Serena thinks. They all try their best not to be obvious about it, as they didn’t want Yuto and Shay to feel worse.

Yuto and Shay lead the way, and see a water fountain still miraculously working. They see a middle-aged woman gathering water. “Hey!” Shay calls her. The woman sees Shay’s duel disk, and she starts to run. ‘Wait! We’re from here!’ Shay attempts to call after her, but she’s already run off. Shay

glances at Yuto, who is more surprised than he is. “Do our own people not recognize us…?” Yuto wonders out loud, his voice trembling.
Sylvio and Crow’s stomach growl in unison. “The base has food… But it’s hardly more than what the Facility serves.” Yuto comments. “That’s good enough for us!” Crow says, smiling. Yuto subtly notices Crow and Sylvio holding hands. Wait… Are they…? Yuto chooses not to out them, and just keeps walking.
They eventually all make it to the Resistance base. “I can smell it…” Shay grits his teeth. “There must’ve been another attack while we were gone.” Yuto’s eyes widened, and they both had the same thought: to check on their friends. They burst through the secret entrance.
When they entered, they saw that the shelter had expanded, and that there were more homeless people being fed than the last time they were here. They spot two familiar faces, who run over to meet them. “Yuto! Shay!” A girl with bluish purple hair calls them. ‘Saya! Allen!’ Shay says in return. Saya and Allen run up to them. “You’re back! I was beginning to worry that you were dead!” Saya admitted. “Did you find Ruri?” Allen asked. Yuto shook his head. “No, but we found allies.” He introduced them to the Lancers, who were made for the express purpose of

opposing Duel Academy. “So this kook is the Professor’s son?” Allen asks Yuto, pointing toward Reiji. “Kook?” Reiji questions.
The rest of the Lancers introduce themselves, and Saya and Allen are impressed with the sheer diversity. “I’m Serena. I was originally a part of Duel Academy, but Yuzu here opened my eyes to the truth.” She explained. Allen narrowed her eyes at her, but didn’t say anything. The fact that she didn’t elaborate made things more awkward.
‘I’m Yuya Sakaki, and I’m from the Standard Dimension.’ Yuya introduced. Allen and Saya gasped. “Sakaki? You’re the son of that %$?” Allen reacted angrily. Yuya was taken off guard by Allen’s sudden anger. “Y… Yeah, but I’m trying to forge my own path without his reputation over my head…” Yuya tried to defend himself. He could tell Allen was judging him for being Yusho’s son. Saya didn’t react angrily; instead she just looked sad.
After all the Lancers were introduced, Shay asked, “what happened since we left?” Allen looked at the ground. ‘Duel Academy launched a second raid… “He told them. Everyone reacted in shock.” Is Kaito okay? Where is he?’ Shay asked with worry in his voice. “Kaito’s alive, but… His family was carded in the raid. He’s completely isolated himself from everyone since then, even us. Kaito’s been on a

rampage against the remaining Duel Academy students, and he's attacked them so brutally… Reminds me of a mercenary. He's changed, Shay." Allen explained. This shocked Shay and Yuto.
"I'm going to find Kaito…" Shay declared, and turned around. Yuto silently followed, leaving the Lancers behind awkwardly. "Now that you're all here, I guess you could help us with serving out food?" Saya suggested. Crow and Sylvio quickly agreed.
Shay and Yuto are seen in the ruins of the Clover Branch school, looking for any signs of Kaito's whereabouts. They don't speak to each other, as they are still processing the information they obtained.
The two don't find Kaito, but they see the woman run into a broken down house. Shay approaches the house carefully. "Hello?" Shay says, entering. He sees the woman with her two kids, and she gets scared. 'Please don't hurt us! We've already lost enough!' She wailed. Yuto and Shay are still stunned by her not recognizing them. "Ma'am… We're from this dimension." Yuto said gently, showing her his duel disk. She seemed to calm down when she noticed. "You're… From the Spade Branch resistance… I thought you had all been killed." She said. "I'm Yuto, and this is Shay. We left to find our comrade who was kidnapped by Duel Academy…

But it seems as though we are the last ones left from our school." Yuto responded. "Oh, I'm sorry. I just saw the duel disk and didn't recognize you, so I assumed you were from Duel Academy. Forgive me." She apologized. "No, it's alright." Yuto reassured her. "My husband was killed in the recent raid, so I've been more jumpy lately… Food and water's been scarcer, too." She told them. "You can always come to the main Resistance's base." Shay offered. The woman seemed to not realize this, so she agreed. They decided to take her back, and resume their search for Kaito later.

Meanwhile, Crow and Sylvio are seen eating soup together. "Wow, it's really good!" Crow says. 'Really?' Saya asks. "Yeah." Sylvio nods. "Oh… Thanks. You Lancers seem to be the only ones who actually like it. We just eat it because it can be made from scraps that we have left." Saya says. These poor Lancers… If they think this food is good, then what have their palates been subjected to? Saya wonders.

Shay and Yuto return with the middle aged woman and her kids. Allen gets them checked in, and Saya gives them each soup. "This tastes funny!" One of the children complains. "Don't be rude! This is all they have!" The mother scolds.

Yuto looks around the room at the people of his

dimension. While he is relieved to know that his friends are okay, he is saddened to see the city still in ruins, and his people more hopeless than ever. Yuto runs back out, finding the crowded room overwhelming. Shay notices and goes after him.

Yuto runs toward the destroyed Spade Branch school. His mind has flashbacks to the invasion, and he pictures Ruri. When I left this place, I thought that I would return with her… But I haven't. Everything is the same… But then he pictures the faces of his fellow Lancers smiling, and their happiness reassures him. No, it isn't the same. I have new comrades to fight for, and now I won't have to fight Duel Academy with just Shay and I. Now we have a chance.

Yuto arrives at the Spade school, and looks around. He sees the motto "steeled strength and iron will shows the true strength of a duelist" on a poster on the wall. He sees that the pictures of each trio in the school were still hanging up, and he spots his picture. In the picture, Ruri has her arms around Yuto and Shay's necks, trying to bring them closer. However, the two boys in the picture look very uncomfortable. I always thought that picture wasn't the most flattering…

Later, we see Yuto walk out of the Spade school, only to hear something. "Yuto Ikari… I'm surprised

to see you back.” Yuto turns, and sees Kaito standing on top of the broken down school. ‘Kaito!’ He exclaims. Shay comes in right in time, and reacts the same way. Kaito narrows his eyes at them. “You didn’t find Ruri.” He said in an angry tone. “Not yet, but we have reinforcements! We’re going to launch a raid on Duel Academy if you want to join us!” Shay yelled toward him. “Leave me alone.” Kaito told them. Yuto and Shay froze up. What? They watched Kaito as he jumped off the roof of the building and ran off. “Hey! Get back here!” Shay yelled after him, and started running. Yuto followed, too. Yuto stared at Kaito from behind, his eyes clouded in sadness. Kaito… I’m sorry…

81. Divergence

Back with the Lancers, they're all getting restless and are wondering where the heck Yuto and Shay went off to. "I can't believe they just left us here!" Yugo complained.
Gong looked around, and seemed to be the only one that noticed that Yuzu, Serena, and Yuya weren't there. He pointed out to the other Lancers. "We shouldn't go out looking for them. They'll find their way back." Reiji tells them. 'How? Our two tour guides are gone!' Sylvio remarked. Reiji held up his duel disk and reminded him of the tracking feature. "Ohhh I forgot about that." Sylvio admitted. "So that's how you were able to find us in the underground facility?" Crow realized. Reiji nodded.
Yuzu and Serena are scaling the area, seeing all the broken down debris of the once towering city. "This place is so depressing. I just wanna get out of here." Serena muttered. 'Once we recruit more members, we'll be going to Duel Academy.' Yuzu told her. "This is all really overwhelming, you know? I mean, the fact that somehow you, Ruri, Rin, and I look the same… And Yuya, Yuto, Yugo, and Yuri look the same… And now we're in the place that my

dimension invaded, and it just makes me feel stupid for wanting to be here so badly." Serena admitted. "Once the fight against Duel Academy ends, I'll continue to take you places." Yuzu promised.

Serena's face softened, which made Yuzu smile. It's so sad that she never had a childhood… I just wish I could quell her doubts. Yuzu felt a strange feeling hit her, something she didn't understand. Huh… I feel like Serena and I are connected, somehow? Is this what having a sister is like? She wondered. As Yuzu gazed into Serena's eyes, she dismissed the thought. No, for some reason I don't think that's it. So what is it, then?

Later, we see Yuya wandering around on his own, and he ends up at the broken down Clover Branch school. He is shocked to see posters of his father on the walls. "What?" He yelled out loud. I knew he was here, but I didn't realize he taught here! Yuya took the poster down and checked the date. Anger flowed through him as he read it. This was around when he left! He abandoned his pro dueling job and my family just to teach here, and to continue doing what he was already doing in the Standard Dimension? Yuya crumpled the poster up and threw it on the ground.

Suddenly, Yuya notices a cloaked figure approaching him. "What are you doing here?" The

figure asked. ‘I’m looking for leads on my father.’ Yuya told him. He noticed the cloaked figure clenching his fist. “You’re the son of Yusho Sakaki?” He asked in anger. Yuya confirmed this, and the cloaked figure activated their duel disk, and Yuya realized by the shape that he was from Duel Academy. Yuya activated his duel disk in surprise. My father really is hated by everyone! What did he do to Duel Academy? “This is perfect. Now I can use you as bait to draw him out.” The figure commented. “Not if I defeat you!” Yuya yelled at him.

The duel takes up most of the episode. Interestingly, the cloaked figure’s hood comes off after Yuya attacks, revealing himself to be Aster Phoenix, the legacy character from GX and also the Commander-in-chief of Duel Academy. (The leader of their military and the implied leader of the XYZ, Standard, and Synchro invasion squad) Aster goes on to rant about how he lost to Yusho, and how that’s haunted him and he wants revenge. Instead of defending his father like normally, Yuya tries to sympathize with Aster, but he obviously doesn’t listen.

Yuya ends up beating Aster, which humiliates him. Embarrassed that he lost to Yusho and his own son, Aster activates his duel disk. He disappears in a light

of purple. “Aster!” Yuya calls out. Was he that ashamed to lose to me that he ran off? Yuya wondered.
We see Aster arrive at Duel Academy, and report to the Professor that the “Z piece” is in the XYZ Dimension, and is the son of Yusho Sakaki. This intrigues the Professor.
Suddenly, a shadow enters the room, revealing himself to be Yusho Sakaki. This reveal shows that Yusho has been working for Duel Academy the whole time. “I suspect that Yuya is with your own son, Reiji.” Yusho told Leo. ‘Reiji seemed to not be happy with you when he came to the Academy all those years ago… So I wouldn’t be surprised if he’s out for you.’ Yusho commented. “He’s probably devised his own group of Lancers…” The Professor realized. Yusho nodded. “That’s why we keep picking up those Pendulum readings throughout the Standard and Synchro Dimension; Yuya and the Lancers are traveling across dimensions.” Yusho deduces.
The Professor narrowed his eyes. “We need to take drastic action to wipe them all out before they reach this dimension. Aster, send in the Tyler twins to the XYZ Dimension.” The professor orders. Aster nods. ‘Do you want me to send in chief Truesdale?’ Leo shook his head. “We don’t need to take THAT

drastic of action. Whatever you do, don’t get him involved.” Leo ordered. Aster nodded. “Got it.”

82. Camaraderie (comrade-ree)

The episode begins with Shay grabbing Kaito's arm to hold him back. "Stop! We want to help you!" Shay yelled. Kaito stopped running, and gave Shay a hard glare; a glare so full of hatred that Shay released Kaito's arm in shock. 'I don't need your help.' Kaito responded coldly. "Kaito… We heard about what happened to your family. Please, we just want to help you." Yuto insisted. Kaito glared at Yuto, which sent a shiver down Yuto's spine. I barely recognize him… The Kaito I know would never look at his friends like that. "You two are ones to talk. Didn't you both go on murderous rampages against Duel Academy students after Ruri disappeared?" Kaito pointed out. Shay clenched his fist in anger, but he couldn't respond as he knew Kaito was right. He's right… I'm a hypocrite… Yuto thought miserably. "And when you did that, you know what I did? I let you two get your rage out. I didn't interrupt you two, because I understood what you were going through. See where I'm going with this?" Kaito remarked.

Shay grabbed onto Kaito's shoulder aggressively.

“Duel me.” He demanded. ‘Why should I?’ Kaito asked. “I want to help.” Shay insisted. “Were you not listening to me?” Kaito asked angrily. Shay ignored this and activated his duel disk. “If I win, you have to come with Yuto and I in our group to stop Duel Academy. If I lose, we’ll leave you alone. Got it?” Shay asked. “Whatever.” Kaito replied, and the duel began. Yuto couldn’t believe what was unfolding in front of him. He was still in shock that Kaito was like this, but he couldn’t help but get where he was coming from. I did assist Shay in killing so many… Yuto thought, his expression saddening.

Meanwhile, Yuya, Yuzu, and Serena returned to the Lancers. “Where were you all?” Yugo asked. ‘Oh, just looking around, y’know.’ Yuya lied. “Did you see Yuto and Shay?” Reiji asked. They shook their heads. “Man, at this point it’s just rude of them.” Yugo remarked.

We later see Serena walk up to Crow after he is finished with his shift. “Oh, what’s up?” Crow asked. Serena felt unsure at first, but she decided to go through with it. ‘Hey… Can you help me with something?’ She asked. “Of course.” Crow agreed. Serena blushed. “So, umm… y’know how you and Sylvio are together?” She asked. Crow nodded. “Yeah, we’re together.” He said proudly. “Right…

So what is that like?" Serena asked. "What do you mean?" Crow raised an eyebrow. "No, not like that… I mean, what is it like being with someone you love?" Serena asked. Crow's eyes widened in shock. Does Serena not understand what love is? He wondered.

Back to the duel, Shay summons his trusty Vanishing Laniuses. "Typical." Kaito remarks. 'You know it's my favorite card.' Shay reminded him. "You're so predictable. You never change your strategy. This is why you've never beaten me." Kaito responded coldly. "I will this time." Shay vows. "We'll see." Kaito replied. Kaito's right. Shay's never won before… Back when our schools faced each other, Kaito always was known as the strongest duelist. Shay has always been second. He was always known to be three steps ahead of his opponent, and could read his opponent's strategies with just one move… But, unlike back then, this is when it really matters for Shay to finally beat Kaito… Yuto thinks.

"Do you like someone? Is that why you're asking?" Crow asked Serena. 'How should I know? I've been a child soldier for most of my life!' Serena snapped. "Okay, okay." Crow quickly responded. So feisty… He thought.

"Well, I guess whenever I'm around Sylvio, we just

naturally can get along like we're in sync. I get the feeling like nothing else matters when I'm with him… Every moment means something; every word, every touch, every day…" Crow goes on. Serena stared at him in contemplation. 'How much do you really want to know? Because I feel like I'm just bragging about my boyfriend at this point… "Crow remarked." I guess… I do like someone.' Serena replied. Crow could tell by the look on her face that she wasn't happy about it. "What's wrong?" He asked.

We see Allen and Saya looking for Yuto and Shay, and they find Kaito and Shay dueling. "The Lancers have been worried about you two; don't you know how rude it was to leave them in an unfamiliar place?" Allen scolds Yuto. Yuto nodded in agreement. 'You're right, I'm sorry. We got so caught up in our personal issues that we forgot about our comrades.' Yuto told them. "You really need to learn to stop apologizing so much." Allen scoffed, folding his arms. Saya smiled at him. "Well, at least you're still the same kind-hearted Yuto." Saya told him. Yuto looked down grimly. "I don't think I am." He admitted. Saya and Allen looked at him in shock. "Is it wrong?" Serena asked Crow desperately. 'Is what wrong?' Crow asked. Then it dawned on him. The reason she's asking me about love over anyone

else is because Sylvio and I are boyfriends… He realized. “No! It’s not wrong at all!” Crow reassured her. “You’re the only couple I’ve seen who haven’t been of different genders.” Serena admitted. “Yeah, I get it. Wait a minute…” Crow realized. “You like Yuzu?” He asked. Serena put her hand over his mouth. “Be quiet!” She snapped at him. “I… Think I do…” She whispered. Crow’s eyes widened.

After Kaito attacks Shay, Shay is sent flying. “Even if I am knocked down, I will keep crawling back up to fight alongside my comrades. Don’t you remember? That’s the spirit of the Resistance. You were the one who kept me going when we were first invaded; always reminding me to numb myself out and to not freeze up. If it weren’t for you, I’d be dead!” Shay yelled at Kaito. This revelation made Yuto, Allen, and Saya shocked, and it even garnered a slight reaction from Kaito. ‘Of course I remember that. I wouldn’t forget something that important.’ Kaito responded in a notably less angry tone. “I want to destroy Duel Academy just as badly as you do, Kaito. But I want to do it by your side!” Shay told him. Kaito… By our side again… Yuto thought, remembering Kaito fighting by his and Shay’s side during the invasion.

“Why aren’t you happy about this?” Crow asked. “I don’t want to ruin what Yuzu and I have…” Serena

confessed. Crow closed his eyes. I understand that fear. I remember when Shinji and I were out on our own, it was especially scary… I didn't want the person I idolized and lived with to hate me for liking him… Not just for liking him, but for being gay. With Sylvio it wasn't as scary… It was pretty obvious that he liked me first, but I still had that paranoia. Crow thought. Crow put his hands on Serena's shoulders, which shocked her. This is… What Yuzu and Yuto did to me! How does he…? She wondered.

'You can't be afraid to shoot your shot. If Yuzu truly is your friend, she'll understand. Even if things don't work out, at least you'll know that you tried.' Crow told Serena. Serena's eyes widened, and she nodded in determination. I will tell her… One day. But I should give her some time… She did just reject Yuya, after all. "Thanks, Crow." Serena said to him. "No problem!" Crow smiled.

"I used to believe that you wanted to fight by my side… But then you left, and the second raid happened…" Kaito said bitterly. Shay gasped. Is he upset that I left him behind? 'I crossed dimensions to find Ruri… I had no idea that you wanted to go with me.' Shay admitted. "Then why are you playing with me? Why would you come back and deceive me if Ruri isn't back?" Kaito yelled at him.

“We came back to recruit the Resistance in our efforts to fight against Duel Academy! I want you back by my side!” Shay insisted. This seemed to trigger something within Kaito, and he stared at Shay in shock. Shay’s face softened. “I want you by my side again, Kaito.” Shay told him.
With that, Shay won the duel, sending Kaito flying. Shay used his Blaze Falcon to save Kaito from getting injured. He looked up in shock to see Shay riding the falcon that saved him. “Shay…” Kaito murmured. Shay extended a hand down to Kaito. “We’re friends, remember? I would never leave a friend behind.” He told Kaito. Kaito’s eyes widened, and he took Shay’s hand.
Never leave a friend behind… Saya thought, and she started to cry. “What’s wrong?” Allen asked. Saya’s mind flashes back to a montage of her and Ruri hanging out at a coffee shop. Yuto put his hands on her shoulders, which seemed to surprise her. ‘That’s… The grounding technique Ruri would use… “Saya gasped. Yuto nodded.” Yeah. She would always comfort me like this. I try my best to spread her influence to others in pain.’ Yuto responded. Allen started to laugh, which surprised Yuto. “Do you hear yourself right now? You really think that you aren’t kind?” Allen pointed out. Yuto’s face seemed to soften at his friend’s

reassurance.
Shay and Kaito walked toward their remaining friends. “Well, I guess I’m going with you.” Kaito told Yuto. Yuto nodded. ‘I’m glad you’re with us.’ Yuto replied. “I think we should go back to the shelter. The Lancers are probably sending a search party out for you two.” Allen remarked. They all nodded.

83. Origins: Ruri Obsidian Part 1

The episode begins with Ruri, Shay, and her unnamed parents as little kids. Shay has just given her a starter pack. “Thank you! This is the best present ever!” Ruri says, hugging her brother tightly. “Heyyy let go!” Shay protests, which makes his parents laugh.

We see Ruri getting ready for her first day at the Spade Branch. She’s on the phone texting Saya, implying that she knew Saya and the Clover Branch trio before this point. “Ruri? We’re gonna be late!” She hears her brother yell. “Alright!” Ruri calls back.

The scene fast-forwards to the teacher pairing up trios. Ruri observes the room. Wow, everyone here is so cool! Her eyes lock onto a boy in the corner of the room dressed in all black. Aw, he looks shy. I bet he’s new like me! She thinks. The teacher announces the three students that had the best win/loss record to be the first trio to be appointed. “Shay Obsidian, Yuto Ikari, and Ruri Obsidian.” He announces.

“Hey, I’m Shay Obsidian, a second year student.” Shay introduces himself. ‘And I’m his sister, Ruri!

I’m a first year student just like you!’ Ruri introduces herself. Yuto nods. “It’s nice to meet you…” He says timidly. Yuto seems so sweet! Ruri thinks. “Welcome to the Spade school!” Shay says with enthusiasm, and shakes Yuto’s hand. Ruri could tell Yuto was taken aback by this action, but shakes his hand in return. “So delicate… And to think these hands played a deck full of knights!” Shay teased. “Yeah, I know.” Yuto said, looking down quietly. Ruri giggled at this. How mysterious! The conflicting traits Yuto has are quite interesting…

Later, we see Ruri talking to Saya in a coffee shop. “How was your day?” Ruri asks. ‘It was great! One of my teachers was this man named Yusho Sakaki. He taught us about how dueling was meant to unite and entertain people… The bonds and happiness dueling forges will continue on if there are more entertainment duelists.’ Saya gushes. She tells Ruri more about what dueltainers are. “I’m training to be a dueltainer myself. I want to enjoy duels more instead of getting scared, so I think this is the perfect opportunity!” She declared. “That’s great! I’ll be rooting for you.” Ruri tells her.

The scene transitions to the school photoshoot. The camerawoman calls Ruri’s trio first, as they were at the top of their class. “C’mon guys!” Ruri says excitedly, pulling Yuto and her brother’s heads

forward with her arms. “Ruri… Wait!” Shay tries to protest, but it’s too late. The picture was already taken.

Ruri notices that Yuto seems embarrassed about the picture. “It’s alright, I think you look great!” She reassures him. She notices him blushing and looks away. He’s so cute! Ruri thinks.

We see the trio of friends hanging out together at the mall. “Hey, I think there’s some cards on sale!” Ruri says in excitement. They gather around the card packs. ‘Oooh! There’s some new Lyrilusc cards out!’ She exclaims. Yuto and Shay watch her purchase the packs, and she immediately rips them open. “C’mon, Cobalt Sparrow!” Ruri crossed her fingers. “Ruri, the odds of drawing a Cobalt Sparrow are extremely low…” Shay mentioned. “I think she can do it.” Yuto said, which made Ruri smile. She eventually and conveniently drew three Cobalt Sparrows. “Yesss!” Ruri exclaimed, excited. She went to hug Yuto, which took him off guard. “Thank you for your support!” She said. “I’m always happy to help.” Yuto told her.

We see a montage of Ruri dueling other Spade Branch students and winning with her Lyrilusc deck. “Great job, Ruri!” Yuto congratulated her, his eyes full of admiration. She smiled and thanked him. ‘Any words for me, Shay?’ Ruri teased him. “I

already knew you would win.” He told her.
Later, there’s a scene of Ruri talking to Saya at the coffee shop. “Anything going on with you?” Saya asked. “No, it’s the same stuff. Shay, Yuto, and I hang out a lot together after school, and I’m just practicing my dueling!” Ruri informed her.
“I’ve noticed that you’ve been hanging out with Yuto alone more lately.” Saya commented. Ruri blushed. ‘Yuto has the sweetest soul! He’s so kind and supportive, and it’s really cute whenever I catch him getting flustered around me.’ Ruri gushed. Saya smiled. “Oh you know what you’re doing Ruri… You player!” She teased. “No, I’m not using him! I like him, too!” Ruri tried to deny it. “I was just joking! Besides, there’s nothing wrong with being confident in shooting your shot. It’s so obvious that he likes you.” Saya replied. “Yeah, you’re right.” Ruri smiled. “Keep playing with his heart until he can’t take your cuteness and he has to confess!” Saya encouraged. “Right!” Ruri agreed.
We see Ruri and Yuto cheering on Shay in his duel with Kaito.
Afterwards, Ruri talks to Dennis, Yusho’s dueltainer apprentice. “It’s a pleasure to meet you!” Dennis exclaims, taking her hands. ‘It’s a pleasure to meet you, too!’ Ruri says with the same amount of enthusiasm. “What brings you to Yusho’s show?”

Dennis asked. “I have a friend who really looks up to him.” Ruri tells him. “Oooh! We love a supportive friend!” Dennis comments with a dramatic hand gesture. “How about you? Why are you here?” Ruri asks. “I’m Yusho’s dueltainer apprentice!” Dennis says. “Oh nice!” Ruri responds. “It’s always been my dream to be like Yusho! To entertain the crowds, and bring smiles to people’s faces.” Dennis tells her. “Well, I hope you succeed in that!” Ruri encourages him. “I have to go, the show is wrapping up soon.” Dennis says. “Alright.” Ruri turns to leave. “If I should ever have the pleasure of running into you again, call me Dennis McField!” Dennis tells her. “Okay! My name is Ruri Obsidian!” She tells him.

84. Origins: Ruri Obsidian Part 2

The episode begins with Ruri and Yuto on a park bench. After they finish feeding the pigeons, Ruri says, “all that dueling today has left me exhausted! I could use a nap!” She lays her head on Yuto’s right shoulder. She feels Yuto jerk a little at first, like he always does when she touches him, but he eventually settles down. Ruri closes her eyes, but she can tell by his movement that he’s looking at her. She pretends to be asleep. Ruri feels her cheeks growing warm from lying on Yuto’s shoulder. I can tell he likes it… She thinks to herself. They stay like this for a while.

After Ruri finishes dueling, she sees Yuto walking over to her. “Oh hey! What’s up?” She asks, and she can see Yuto blushing. Is this what I think…? She wonders.

“Hey… So, ummm… We’ve been friends for a while now, and… When I’m by your side, it’s like all my fears, anxieties, and insecurities melt away because of your warm presence. I really feel blessed and thankful to have you in my life. Every day with you is a memory worth having… I don’t want to

pressure you to do anything, but I just wanted to be honest with you; that I really like you." Yuto confessed. Ruri's eyes widened, and she embraced him. 'Aww, you're so sweet! I like you, too!' She told him. Ruri could tell that there was relief in Yuto's eyes and he hugged her tighter. "And I don't feel pressured at all, because I want this. I want you to be my boyfriend." She said to him.

Yuto's face was bright red, and he couldn't say anything. Ruri put her hands on his shoulders, which seemed to calm him down. "How did you…?" Yuto tried to ask. 'It's a grounding technique I learned from my parents! Whenever you're stressed, angry, or sad, you hold your shoulders or have someone else do it. It'll calm you down and help you think clearly!' Ruri informed him. "Thank you. I'm sure I'll end up using this a lot." Yuto said awkwardly. Ruri giggled at this. "You know, you might not always need to use this on yourself. Maybe one day you'll comfort other people!" She suggested. "Maybe." Yuto said back.

We see Ruri on a date with Yuto at a restaurant. "Hey… I got you something." Yuto told her, and he gave her a small box. Ruri opened it, and gasped. Inside were blue feather earrings. 'Yuto! I love these!' She exclaimed. "Thank you!" She said, hugging him.

We see a montage of Yuto attempting to go in for a kiss, but backs out when he sees Shay. “It’s okay, Yuto. He won’t hurt you!” Ruri reassured him.
The two are shown back at the park sitting on the bench together. “I really enjoy hanging out with you.” Ruri admits, and she holds Yuto’s hand. She tries to cup his cheek, but he seems shocked. ‘Oh, I’m sorry! Did you not want me to… “Ruri starts to ask.” No! I’m fine with it, you just… Took me by surprise.’ Yuto told her. He was blushing. “Well, then you’d better get used to me comforting you!” Ruri declared. “I will.” Yuto promised. Ruri suddenly planted a kiss on his forehead; and this time, he didn’t flinch. “Did you like that?” She teased. Yuto couldn’t find the words to respond; he simply nodded, and gazed into her eyes. They finally had their first official kiss.
Later, Ruri is seen giving Yuto a gift of her own. He opens it, and sees a golden necklace. “Thank you.” He says, and puts it on. “It looks great!” Ruri tells him. He smiles at this.
Later on, the friend group is hanging out together at the mall. They are all talking about their last names. (Which seems like a random subject but it’s what friends would talk about) “I don’t like my last name…” Yuto admits. ‘I guess that’s fair. It means ‘wrath’ and ‘anger,’ and I can’t picture you like that

at all! You're too kind-hearted for that.' Shay points out. "Yuto Ikari… Nah, you're right, it doesn't fit his character." Allen agrees.
"Well, you know…" Saya begins. 'He may as well be Yuto Obsidian.' A look of shock spreads across Shay's face when she says this. He notices Ruri holding a blushing Yuto's hand. "Ohh! Why didn't you tell me you were dating?" He asked. Shay wasn't upset like Yuto anticipated. "I'm sorry… I didn't want to ruin our friendship." Yuto apologized. Shay reassured him that it was all good. "It's fine! I know you'll be a good partner for my sister! I hope you do become part of the family one day! Then we can go on vacation together and do all sorts of things!" Shay tells him. Yuto smiles. Thanks, Saya. Ruri thinks to herself.
A time skip ensues, and Yuto and Ruri are walking through the center of Heartland City together. Suddenly, they hear screaming and they see people running past them. "What's going on?" Ruri asks them. 'There are duelists invading! They're summoning monsters that are able to cause real damage!' A random unnamed character cries. Shocked, Yuto and Ruri exchange glances. "We have to find our friends and family and get somewhere safe!"
Unfortunately, back at the house, the house has been

completely destroyed. “Where are they?” Ruri asks in panic. Shay tries to look around, but all he can see is the suddenly smoky black sky. “Ruri, I think we should meet up with the others and figure out what’s going on.” He explains.
The two of them see the large Ancient Gear Monsters and students in jackets coming from portals. They try to avoid them, and find the friend group. “Yuto’s been knocked out!” Saya informs them. ‘What? What’s going on?’ Ruri and Shay react in shock, seeing their friend lying on the ground. “Shay, come with me. We have to fight off these invaders.” Kaito tells him. “Invaders?” Shay questions. “Yes, they’re Fusion Duelists.” He says. “I’ll stay with Yuto.” Ruri tells them. They nod and split up.
Yuto awakens in a sheltered area with Ruri and his friends around him. They fill him in on the situation. “They’re from the Fusion Dimension and can make damage real. I’ve never seen anything like this…” Kaito says while gritting his teeth. Yuto tearfully explains what he witnessed, which shocks everyone. ‘They won’t get away with this!’ Shay declares angrily. “We’ve organized a resistance group of the survivors who can duel, and we’re going to take back our city!” Kaito says.
Later, we see Ruri comforting Yuto as he is breaking

down about his mother's death. She grips his shoulders tightly. "We're gonna get through this." She tells him.
We see a montage of the friend group changing into more practical clothes as they prepare to fight back together. "Are you sure you're strong enough?" Ruri asks Yuto. 'I have to assist Shay.' He tells her. "Alright… I'll defend the base while you're gone." She says. He nods, and notices the red sash of her dress. "Is that…?" He wonders. She nods. "It's a reminder of you and Shay. You two mean the most to me." Ruri confesses. Yuto looks at his own red scarf, and remembers the one Shay has. He kisses her on the lips. "Thank you." He says, before heading off. Ruri holds her fingers to her lips, trying to savor the lingering feeling.
Ruri is seen defending the base with her Lyrilusc cards, and is horrified by the damage done by the Ancient Gear Monsters. This can't be! Why are they doing this? She sees people get carded and viciously killed, and she looks away quickly. What did we do to deserve this?
We see Ruri in a new scene entering a building that is slowly collapsing, looking desperately for Saya. "Saya?" She calls. She finds her friend on the top floor, crying. 'Ruri… I'm scared! I can't leave! I don't want those monsters to find me!' Saya cries.

“We have to leave! This building is going to collapse at any second!” Ruri takes her friend’s hand and runs down the stairs, and the two barely make it out in time.

The episode ends with Ruri still at the base, trying to nurse the XYZ citizens back to health. She witnesses a lot of them die, duelists and non-duelists, which traumatizes her. This isn’t right! Dueling shouldn’t be used for war. How could the Fusion Warriors be so heartless to kill innocent civilians? Ruri thinks with tears in her eyes, as she comforts a little boy who is slowly dying. “Is my mother okay?” The boy asks. ‘Shhhh get some rest.’ Ruri tells him gently, trying not to let the child know her fears. She holds him in her arms. The child closes his eyes, and never wakes up. Ruri tries to shake him awake, even though she knows the truth. Her tears fall onto the boy’s forehead. “Please… Let their suffering end!” Ruri cries out, but her words fall on deaf ears, as everyone in the room is dying and everyone outside is fighting.

85. Origins: Ruri Obsidian Part 3

In a new scene, Yuto has just destroyed an Ancient Gear Soldier. He turns to hear Ruri's voice in the ensuing chaos. She is seen hugging a little girl who has lost her parents, and yells out, "dueling isn't supposed to be used like this! Dueling should make people happy!"

Suddenly, a Fusion Warrior summons an Ancient Gear Hound to attack Ruri and the little girl. Ruri quickly pulls out her cards and defends the girl. She manages to "win" the scuffle between the two monsters, and her Lyrilusc card relentlessly attacks the Fusion duelist. 'Stop! I don't want this!' Ruri cries out. Yuto activates Fog Blade to stop her monster from attacking the student, but it's too late. The Fusion Warrior is dead. Ruri looks at the body in horror, realizing that she did this. Yuto embraces her as she cries. "I… killed him… I'm a monster… I didn't want to do it! Why does it have to be like this?" I'm a monster… Ruri thinks.

"What happened out there?" Shay demanded. 'I… killed a Fusion Warrior… I'm a monster.' Ruri told her brother. He gave her a hard glare. "You are not a

monster. The Fusion Warriors are. You did what needed to be done to protect this girl. Something like this was bound to happen sooner or later…" Shay told her coldly. "What do you mean? I'm awful! I killed someone, Shay! Someone who had a life: a family, a home, friends… They'll never have that again! I took that away from them! I have blood on my hands that can't be washed off!" Ruri cried. Yuto held her tightly, but didn't comment. Ruri secretly appreciated Yuto's calming presence.

"You can't dwell on those things, Ruri!" Shay suddenly snapped. 'I can't forgive myself.' Ruri told him. "If you spend one second hesitating during a battle, that can be a matter of life and death. Are you willing to throw your life away, thinking that you've done the right thing, while the friends you could've protected are slain?" Shay demanded.

"There is nothing wrong with doing what is right. Taking on responsibility and accepting your faults is what makes you human." Yuto defended. Shay's eyes narrowed at his best friend. 'Are you willing to let us die just so you can be the hero?' He asked. "We're stronger than that. We'll protect each other so nobody gets left behind." Yuto insisted. "What makes you so sure of that? We could be killed at any moment!" Shay yelled at him. "You and Ruri's soft-hearts are going to lead to your demise! Do you

realize how selfish you two are being? Do you not see how much your deaths would hurt the people around you?" Ruri's mind flashed back to her brother telling her how her kind heart would one day bite her. Please… I can't stand watching you two fight over me!

Shay turned to leave, a hint of sadness in his eyes. Ruri crouched to the ground and cried more, prompting Yuto to hug her tightly. "What did we do to deserve this?" She asked tearfully. Yuto gripped onto Ruri's shoulders. 'I love you. We're going to get through this together, no matter what anyone says. I promise.' Yuto said, a tear running down his cheek. He caressed her cheek to comfort her. "I love you, too." Ruri said softly. "We'll get through this together." Tears ran down the soldier's cheeks as he reassured Ruri with hollow words. "I promise."

A scene occurs where Yuto is off to fight in the invasion once again. "Please be careful." Ruri tells him. He nods. 'I will. I love you.' Yuto says, and he gets down on one knee and kisses her hand. "I love you, too." Ruri repeats the sentiment. Yuto's kind gesture makes Ruri blush, and is left clutching her hand where Yuto had kissed as she watches him leave. Yuto really is like a knight now… Ruri thought to herself, remembering the times before the invasion when he told her how badly he wished he

had a knight's honor and bravery. He's certainly chivalrous!

A timeskip happens, and the invasion has finally ended. Ruri is seen tackling multiple jobs at once because she wants to help out everywhere. I miss seeing my friends… She thinks solemnly as she serves out food to the homeless. Ruri pictures Yuto in her mind, who she had not seen in some time. This war has changed Yuto… He's hardened his heart and no longer smiles his beautiful smile… But at least his heart is still the same…

Later, we see Ruri up at night crying because she misses her friends. The invasion may be over, but nothing is the same anymore… I know people need me, but I want to be with Shay, Yuto, Saya, Allen, and Kaito again! She remembers how in the early days of the invasion, Yuto was around to comfort her, and vice versa.

Ruri finally gets to reunite with Yuto once they both have a window of time left in their schedules. "You've been doing so much lately… Are you sure you're alright?" He asks her. "It's fine! There's just so much to do… I can handle it." Ruri tells him. Yuto gives her a look of concern.

'You know, we've both been working hard lately, and haven't seen each other as often. I know that it's selfish, but I really wish I could spend all my time

with you.’ Ruri admits. You can’t even begin to understand how badly I’ve missed you! “I know, I wish we could too, but the people need us… But I’ll carry these moments in my heart forever.” Yuto tells her. Ruri’s heart sank at this, but she knew it was the truth. She smiled at him. “Once the city is rebuilt to an extent, and order is restored, maybe things will somewhat return to normal.” Ruri says. “Of course. I’ll always be here.” Yuto tells her, smiling back. The two of them embrace and hold hands. She hears someone calling her name. “I… Have to go. We should get back to our jobs.” Ruri says sadly. Yuto nods, and she can tell from his gaze that he never wanted to let her go, which just makes her heart break. “I’ll make sure that I’ll see you again soon. Sooner than last time.” He promises. “Yeah, me too.” Ruri agrees, and they separate. Ruri Obsidian never expected that that would be the final time she would speak to her boyfriend before being kidnapped.

Later that night, we see Ruri gathering a bucket of water for the remaining survivors. She spots a robed figure creepily staring at her and activating his duel disk, so she runs. She looks behind, and notices that he is chasing her. Ruri’s heart starts beating quickly, as fear courses through her. Oh no, a dead end! She looks on in horror. Ruri turns to see the robed figure

smiling creepily at her.
“What? Weren’t you enjoying our little game of tag?” The figure asks her. I guess I have no choice! She thinks. Ruri said nothing, and activated her duel disk. ‘Fine, fine! If you won’t come along willingly, I’ll force you! But if you win, you can do whatever with me.’ The robed figure tells her. Ruri says nothing. “I’ll take your brooding silence as a yes.” He responds. Their duel begins, and takes up most of the episode.
The robed figure attacks Ruri with his Starving Venom Fusion Dragon. Knowing she is about to lose, time seems to slow down as the dragon’s attack envelops her surrounding area. Ruri closes her eyes and braces for the blow, her eyes tearing up. Yuto, Shay, Kaito, Saya, Allen… Please! Someone, help! She screams as the blast hits her, hoping someone hears her cries.
Ruri is flung into the wall behind her, which knocks the breath out of her, and she collapses. Too tired to run or scream, she starts trembling in fear as the robed figure approaches her. “Now that I’ve won, you have to come with me!” The robed figure declares. Ruri sees him put on a mask, and pull out a dispenser-like object. “Just hold still…” The robed figure says, pinning her down. Ruri tries to struggle, but suddenly inhales something that makes her feel

dizzy. Knowing that she will pass out, she tries to fight back, but falls back to the ground. A tear falls from Ruri's cheek as her eyes close. Yuto… I love you. She thinks. Ruri pictures her and Yuto together in a rebuilt Heartland City in each other's arms safe and sound, before she passes out. The robed figure smiles again and picks up Ruri's unconscious body, and activates a button on his duel disk, teleporting them to Duel Academy.

86. The Homicidal Duo

The episode begins with a young woman in a white and blue outfit in an underground dueling school in the Fusion Dimension. “Good job, everyone! I think our dueling has gotten to the point where we can think about attacking Duel Academy soon.” The woman addressed duelists of all ages. ‘But Alexis! I don’t want any of us to die!’ A little girl wailed. “We won’t let that happen.” The woman known as Alexis reassured them. At least, I hope. She thinks.

As Allen, Saya, Kaito, Shay, and Yuto are walking back, they come across the Tyler Sisters. “Why hello there.” A tall blonde woman addresses the group. ‘It’s our lucky day, Gloria. We have five pieces of prey to hunt today.’ The silver-haired woman says. “It’s the Tyler sisters… Grace and Gloria! They’re the ones who wiped out the Spade Branch!” Allen tells Yuto and Shay. Yuto and Shay narrow their eyes at the sisters angrily. “Kaito, Shay, Yuto… We’ll handle them. Get the Lancers.” Saya orders them. “But what about…” Shay begins. “This is my chance to repent for not saving your sister. No matter what, I can’t run away. If I win, I can feel a

little better about myself. If I lose, then I deserve it." Saya tells him. "But…" Shay tries to argue, but Kaito and Yuto drag him away. "We'll return soon!" Yuto tells her.
"I'm dueling by your side!" Allen resolves, and Saya agrees to this. 'Oh wonderful. The three of them are giving us more prey to hunt on.' Gloria remarks. "We'll be getting Aster several cards as presents…" Grace swooned. Saya and Allen gasp in horror at this implication. "Since there are two of you, how about we duel tag style? We'll share our fields, graveyards, and life points." Gloria offered. Saya and Allen accepted this. "I'll protect you!" Allen resolved. "No, I don't need it." Saya told him. "Awww, how sweet. Her boyfriend's got spunk." Grace mocked them. "Spunk, yes. But the intellect is clearly lacking." Gloria remarked.
Back at the Resistance base, Yuto, Shay, and Kaito updated Reiji on the situation at hand. "We have to help Allen and Saya fight off the Tyler Sisters!" Yuto told them. 'You don't need to take any of us. I believe that you three are capable enough to handle this on your own.' Reiji told them. "What? Why wouldn't you send more?" Shay asked angrily. "You have your own personal grudges against them, I'm sure. Plus, there's no need to get everyone involved unless you three and Saya and Allen lose." Reiji

pointed out. “Fine, whatever. Come on, let’s go help Saya and Allen.” Kaito said, prompting Shay and Yuto to follow.
Meanwhile, after Saya’s failed attack, Gloria says “what a disappointment you two turned out to be.” Grace smiles evilly at Saya and Allen. ‘For realsies. Why would the Professor waste our time on like, such embarrassing amateurs? It’s like an insult to our excellence.’ Grace cruelly remarks. “What do you mean, amateurs?” Allen asked angrily. “We mean your skills suck.” Gloria tells them, and taps her head with her index finger saying, “and you aren’t too bright, either.” Allen grits his teeth in anger. “Is this little girl’s brain so small that she didn’t consider the effect of our monster?” Grace asks tauntingly. Saya is discouraged by this comment. “Hey giraffes! Pick on someone your own size!” Allen yells. “Sorry, I couldn’t hear that. I usually don’t have to strain my ears on someone so close to the ground.” Gloria tells him.
When Grace uses Polymerization, Allen flinches and Saya almost starts to cry. “I fuse Amazoness Spy and Amazoness Tiger! This is gonna be like, totally amazing… But not for you two! Wild beast with vicious fangs! Obtain the eyes of a warrior who hunts down her prey! Appear now and become a new savage beast! Fusion Summon! Level seven,

Amazoness Pet Liger!” Grace chants.
Allen questions why they keep picking on Fairy Cheer Girl. “Isn’t it totes obvious? If we didn’t pick on it, then this duel would be boring since you two aren’t putting up much of a fight.” Grace responds. ‘Just you wait! Once it’s my turn, you’ll be eating your words!’ Allen tells them. “You sure talk big for someone who’s shorter than my Pet Liger.” Grace taunts him.
Saya apologizes to Allen for being a burden, as she feels that she keeps making mistakes that cost them. He tries to reassure her, and takes his turn.
This is the point in the duel when Shay, Kaito, and Yuto arrive.
Right when Allen and Saya think they’re about to win, the tables are turned on them, and they lose. After being flung into a wall behind them, their friends go to try and protect them. “So like, are you ready to make some gift cards, sister?” Grace asks. ‘Yes, let’s.’ Gloria agrees, preparing to card Allen and Saya. Yuto, Shay, and Kaito stand in front of them and activate their duel disks. “Perfect. More gift cards for Aster!” Grace says. The episode ends with the Tyler Sisters starring Shay, Yuto, and Kaito down.

87. The Dilemma of Vengeance

The episode begins with Crow and Sylvio feeding each other food, with Sylvio sitting in Crow's lap. "Shoot, I still need to cook you that five course meal." Crow mentioned. 'Ohhh yeah… But I think when you do that, I want to help.' Sylvio said. "Of course. Anything with you by my side is going to be a treat." Crow responds. "You know, if you were a fruit, you'd be a fineapple." Sylvio remarks playfully.

"Wait…" Crow and Sylvio turn to see the Lancers staring at them feeding each other. 'Dude, what the heck was that pick up line?' Yugo asked Sylvio. "Shut up!" Sylvio yelled, his cheeks flushed. "I didn't know you two were together." Yuya admitted. "Yeah, we are." Crow told him. "Did you know they were together?" Yuzu asked Serena. "Huh? Oh, no I didn't." Serena lied.

"While I don't disapprove of dating within the Lancers… Just know that if things come down to it, there may be a time in this war when you have to leave your loved one behind for the good of the group. Are you two prepared for that?" Reiji asked.

Sylvio gulped, as he clearly was not ready for that, having already lost both of his parents. Crow didn't respond, as he too had lost people in his life. "Think about it before we invade Duel Academy. If you two aren't prepared for the reality of the situation, then perhaps you shouldn't be together. I just want to make sure you two don't feel more suffering, just for having bonds." Reiji warned them. I understand now that these Lancers aren't sacrificial pawns to be used for my own gain anymore… They've become my new family… So I don't want them to get caught off guard by one of them suddenly having to leave this world. Reiji thought, thinking about the times spent together. I hope you're all ready for the incoming invasion.

'So, you all must be Resistance fighters who turned away and fled with your tails between your legs.' Gloria says with a smile on her face. "Shut up! You…" Shay begins to insult them. "They're right…" Yuto realized, which made Kaito and Shay turn to him in shock. "What?" Shay asks. "If we hadn't gone to the Standard Dimension or Synchro Dimension, we could've prevented our comrades from dying…" Yuto said in a somber tone. Shay looked at Yuto in confusion. "But we found the Lancers! We made the right move in the long run!" He argued. "But what about our comrades and the

innocents who were sacrificed?” Yuto asked, his voice shaking.
“Heyyy so like, are we gonna duel, or are you two gonna put us to sleep with this philosophy debate?” Grace asked tauntingly. Yuto turned to the Tyler Sisters with an angry glare in his eyes, which seemed to snap him out of his moral dilemma. ‘I can’t ever forgive you, or Duel Academy for what you’ve done!’ He snaps. “Yeah, yeah, we’ve heard this speech a million times. And you know how it AlWaYs EnDs? With the speaker DEAD!” Grace taunts. They’ll pay! With this, Yuto loses his calm presence and his vengeful anger takes over, no longer dwelling on if he is morally correct or the circumstances of the situation. Shay and Kaito are shocked by the sudden intense presence they feel from Yuto, despite him not speaking much. This is so out of character for Yuto… Kaito thinks. The duel begins.
On Shay’s turn, he says, “if you’re having so much fun then take me on! Along with the souls of my fallen comrades!” Gloria rolls her eyes. ‘Here we go with the speeches.’ She tells Grace. “The more cornered we are, the more fiercely we must fight.” Yuto declares, his eyes flashing with rage. “We’ll show you the strength of the Resistance!” Kaito yells.

As the duel continues on, this happens. “You two are sick; for finding so much pleasure in murdering my comrades!” Yuto yells at them. “Oh my goddd shut up already! Just hearing you XYZ Dimension scum say the same things over and over makes my ears friggin bleed!” Grace says in annoyance.

‘Wait, Grace. That’s the Z piece from this dimension!’ Gloria declares. How do they know about the Revival Zero file? Shay wonders. “Oh… I see. Yuto Ikari, huh? Y’know a girl named Ruri Obsidian?” Grace asks. This triggers him further. “Oh? Did that strike a nerve? Were you two close? Romantically involved? Oh, the tragedy! Have you really crossed dimensions just to find this one girl? How pathetic!” Grace taunted. “I know, right? You all should just die!” Gloria mocked them.

This deeply angers Shay, but before he can say anything, Yuto is taking his turn already. “You’re right, we do deserve the peace that comes with death. However, you two don’t deserve to die; rather, you deserve to live in eternal agony! You monsters deserve the pain and sorrow that you committed on my people. I will make sure that you experience the same nightmares and trauma you gave to us over and over again!” Yuto shouted at them, and Shay and Kaito felt a chill in the air.

“For realsies!” Saya clapped back at them from

behind; mocking their valley girl voices. Allen smiled at this.

Yuto brought out his Dark Requiem and took out the Tyler Twins in the ultimate comeback victory. Shay and Kaito are still in shock at seeing Yuto in such intense anger, and it legitimately scares them a little. The fury of one who is normally kind is the scariest type of fury… Kaito thinks to himself. The Tyler Twins collapse to the ground, as the attack from Dark Requiem does real damage to them.

Yuto approaches them as if he is about to attack them further in a blind rage, but Shay holds him back by putting his hands on Yuto's shoulders. "Yuto! We've already beaten them!" Shay insists. 'That's strange. Weren't you the one who tried to teach me that I should numb out my feelings and get used to killing for revenge?' Yuto asked sarcastically. "I know I am but… Seeing you like this just isn't…" Shay tried to explain. The Tyler Sisters activated their duel disks and sent themselves back to Duel Academy. Their own pride must've made them quit. Kaito thought.

"Why? You've seen me kill many by your side before!" Yuto retorts. 'I know, but this was different… "Shay insists." You've changed, Shay.' Yuto days. "So have you. You're more caught up in dilemmas lately; but when you're triggered by the

mention of Ruri, you abandon it all." Shay points out. This makes Yuto's eyes widen in shock, and he stops arguing. He looks down at his hands. "What am I doing?" Yuto asks, the anger in his voice gone and his presence returning to normal. "Let's just go back to the Lancers." Shay insists. He's right. My anger blinded me again… What would I have done? Would I have killed them? Yuto thinks about Ruri, and how she had said once that she thought he was a knight because he was courteous and gentlemanly. No. I'm far from the knight that you deserve… Yuto thinks.

Back with the Lancers, Shay, Yuto, and Kaito talked to all the Lancers about what happened. Saya and Allen thanked them for stepping in, and commented about how scary Yuto's rage was. "It was so out of character… So scary. So far from the Yuto we know." Saya said. 'I'm sorry if I scared you.' Yuto apologized sincerely. "Nevermind, he hasn't changed at all." Allen remarked.

Reiji stood up and turned toward Kaito. "So… Are you and the Clover Branch Resistance ready to join us in our fight?" He asked. Kaito nodded. 'Alright Lancers, we can start heading out.' Reiji announced. Everyone was shocked, despite knowing that they would probably not be staying long. Still, the thought of the Duel Academy raid being upon them

was a scary thought. “There’s an interdimensional portal near the Clover School. I can show you it.” Kaito offered. Reiji nodded.
Saya and Allen chose to stay behind, as the homeless still needed their help. Yuto, Shay, and Kaito said their goodbyes to them.
As the Lancers approached the portal, Saya stopped Kaito. “Wait! Take this card!” She said. ‘Little Fairy?’ He asked. She nodded. “I want this to remind you of your comrades that are waiting for you at home.” She said. Kaito nodded. “Alright. I’ll keep it with me.” He told her.
I can’t believe we’ll be in the Fusion Dimension once we step in. Yuzu thinks. What are we gonna do? Where will we arrive? Do we even have a plan yet? Declan said he’d make a plan here, but he didn’t? Yuya wonders. Ruri… You’re gonna be safe with me again. I promise… Yuto thinks. Am I prepared to lose Crow? Sylvio wonders. I’m going back to the Fusion Dimension after such a long time… So much has changed… Serena thinks. No matter what, I will protect my fellow Lancers through my style of dueling! Gong resolves. I will protect Sylvio so that Declan’s warnings don’t come true. Crow vows. Rin… I’m coming for you! Yugo thinks. We’re finally getting to Duel Academy. I’ve dreamed of this for so long. Shay thinks. Duel

Academy… By invading it, they'll get a taste of the same fear we felt! Kaito thinks. Father, I will stop you! Reiji thinks. I may not be the perfect human, but I know who I am. I am a Lancer, and I know that I will protect my comrades! Riley thinks.
The episode ends with the Lancers entering the portal.

88. Voyage

The episode begins with some random Duel Academy guards on top of two tall towers. “How’s your day been?” One of them asks. “Oh, same old same old.” The other responds.

Aster suddenly approaches them, which makes the two guards dip their heads politely. “The Professor has requested me to bring Ruri Obsidian and Rin Yukimi to him.” He says. ‘Ruri is behind this door.’ The guard on the left tower says. “Rin is behind this one.” The other guard says. Aster goes to open the door to Ruri’s tower first, but gasps. “Ruri’s… Not here?” Aster asks. The guard looks back in shock. “What the…?” He exclaims. The other guard opens the door to his tower, and is surprised to see that Rin isn’t there. “When could they have escaped? We’ve been here all night!” The guard claims. Aster grits his teeth, knowing the Professor won’t be happy at this turn of events. “We have to find them. Don’t tell the Professor about this.” Aster warned.

Later, we see Rin on the run, trying to find a way off Duel Academy island. She turns a corner, and accidentally bumps into another girl. “Oh! I’m so sorry!” The other girl exclaims. The two girls look at

each other in surprise. ‘Why do you look just like me?’ Rin asks. “I don’t know…” The other girl admits. “Are you from here?” Rin asks. “No, I was kidnapped and taken here.” The girl explains. “Wait, I was too! What a strange coincidence.” Rin admits. Were we captured by the same person? Rin wonders, only vaguely remembering her robed kidnapper. “Alright, then let’s escape together!” The other girl exclaims. Rin nods. “By the way, what’s your name?” She asks. “Oh, I’m Ruri Obsidian. I’m from the XYZ Dimension.” Ruri tells her. “Nice to meet you. I’m Rin Yukimi of the Synchro Dimension.”

Back with the Lancers, they awaken near a harbor filled with boats. Reiji looks around, and sees Duel Academy island far out among the horizon. “I think it would be wise to establish a base to return to.” Reiji says, pointing to the extreme weather shelters near the harbor.

As the Lancers and Clover Branch Resistance fighters gathered, Reiji explained the plan. “We will attack Duel Academy in two raids. The first raid will be more discreet, as our main goal will be to find Ruri and Rin. Therefore, I’m only sending Yuto, Shay, Kaito, Yugo, Gong, and Crow.” He tells them. ‘Anywhere Crow goes, I’m going!’ Sylvio declares. Reiji seemed to have a look of doubt in his eyes, but he allowed it. “Where do we even look?” Yugo asks.

“I’ve sent a drone to fly over to the island, and it seems to have located two twin towers that are heavily guarded. It would stand to reason that that would be the first place to look.” Reiji explained. “Make sure you try to avoid combat, and only focus on saving Ruri and Rin. Only engage if you have to.” He warned them. They agreed to this.
“As for the second raid, all of our forces will strike Duel Academy and infiltrate the building from different areas. We must find the Professor and duel him. With their leader defeated, Duel Academy will be heavily weakened and in utter chaos.” Reiji told the group. ‘Are we going to have to kill them?’ Yuzu asked nervously. “If they won’t surrender, and are actively trying to kill you, then yes. However, it is highly probable that they will surrender, once they are aware of their dire situation… So I doubt the casualties will be high.” Reiji said.
Meanwhile, we see Ruri and Rin hiding in an alleyway as they watch Duel Academy students patrol the surrounding area. “I guess we’ll have to wait out.” Ruri whispered. “Yeah…” Rin agreed, but she was secretly disappointed. She had been waiting around for what felt like forever, and just wanted to go home.
Ruri seemed to notice Rin’s anxiousness to get home, so she put her hands on Rin’s shoulders.

“We’re gonna get out of here.” Ruri told her. ‘How do you know that? I’ve never successfully escaped before.’ Rin protested. “I haven’t, either. Believe me, I’ve tried. But we can’t ruin our chances now. I miss my people just as much as you do.” Ruri explained, picturing her friends and family. Rin could only picture one person in her mind. “You’re lucky that you have people to come back to. I only have one person who I can trust.” Rin remarks. “Oh. I’m sorry about that.” Ruri sympathized. “It’s fine, but… Life in the Synchro Dimension is a cruel society. But he always made it better. With him, I could actually enjoy my life.” Rin said, smiling as she thought of Yugo’s smile. “I understand. Where I come from used to be a happy place, but now it’s a broken wasteland from when Duel Academy invaded… But despite my circumstances, if I had my friends and loved ones around, I could handle it.” Ruri said, thinking back to the invasion.
“Hey, I just noticed… You have pretty earrings.” Rin said, staring at the feathered jewelry. ‘Oh, thanks. My boyfriend gave those to me.’ Ruri said, smiling. “Oh, you have a boyfriend, too?” Rin asks. Ruri nodded. “Yeah… He has the sweetest soul. I’ve missed him a lot.” She says to Rin, remembering all the times Yuto had been there for her; how he’d comfort her during the war, given her gifts, and held

her close. “Can’t say the same about my boyfriend… He can be an idiot sometimes, but I love him.” Rin says, thinking about Yugo and his antics; how she’d have to lecture him for being impulsive, how he’d tease her about bugs, and all the petty arguments they had.
“Alright, I think that’s everything. Are you ready to head out?” Reiji asked the seven Lancers. They nodded.
We later see them sneaking onto a ship that’s set to go to Duel Academy. The remaining Lancers waved goodbye to them, as they set sail.
“We’re finally going to get Ruri back.” Shay declared. Kaito nodded. “Yeah… It’s been a long time coming.” Yuto agreed, his face softening. He couldn’t wait to see Ruri again, after all the time apart from her, all the times he grieved over losing her… It was finally coming to an end within the next few hours. Yuto pictured Ruri, in all her grace and beauty comforting him with her kind, calming presence. Yuto remembered how Ruri had taught him how to ground himself, had reassured him with her smile, and how she had taught him about doing his best to show mercy to opponents.
Yuto held out his hands, still remembering the blood. Will she forgive me for all the times I’ve had to kill for her? He wondered. Shay and Kaito noticed

this strange gesture. Thinking that Yuto wanted a handshake, Shay awkwardly shook his hand. They both realized that they hadn't shaken hands since first meeting. Shay realized instantly that Yuto's grip was no longer timid and weak; but was as firm as his own. "Your hands aren't delicate anymore… You truly have the hands of a knight." Shay told him, remembering their first meeting. Shay could see on his best friend's hand how bruised and callused Yuto's hand was, in contrast to how he first met him. "I guess I do…" Yuto agreed.

Gong and Yugo watched the waves of the water hit the ship in silence. "Are you looking forward to seeing your girlfriend again?" Gong asked, trying to have a conversation. Yugo nodded. 'Yeah… "He said, picturing Rin lecturing him, and all the fun times they've had together." So, if you don't mind me asking, what was she like?' Gong asked. "Rin Rin could be such a nag… But she was also the only person who was patient enough to stay by my side. I know it must've been hard for her to stay with me when she had nowhere else to go. I love Rin for that, y'know?" Yugo commented, looking at his hands, and remembering how it felt to hold onto his motorcycle with Rin in the back holding onto him tightly. "I hope you tell Rin about the changes in the Synchro Dimension." Gong commented. "Yeah, I

will. She'll be excited about that."
Later, we see Crow and Sylvio watching the horizon together, holding hands. "I meant what I said back there." Sylvio said to his boyfriend. 'About going where I go?' Crow asked in amusement. "I'm serious!" Sylvio insisted. "If you say so… I go to some pretty wild places." Crow told him. "Hey, I do too." Sylvio replied. "If this is about what Declan said earlier, then…" Crow began, but Sylvio put a finger to his boyfriend's lips. "I'll protect you so that doesn't happen." Sylvio tells him. Crow moves Sylvio's hand from his mouth. "I'll protect you, too." Crow vows. Because I can't stand to lose anyone else… Crow and Sylvio think in unison.
The horn sounded, which made the seven Lancers look toward the horizon. "We're finally here…" Shay said, as if in disbelief. They all prepared to exit the ship as it parked by the harbor. 'We'll meet back here when we find Ruri and Rin.' Yuto told them. "I'm assuming you three are looking for Ruri?" Gong asked, pointing to Yuto, Shay, and Kaito. They nodded. "Alright, well, Sylvio, Crow, and I will go with Yugo to find Rin." Gong declared. As the ship's door opened, they all looked at each other one final time before splitting up.

89. Reunion and Loss

The episode begins with Yuya back at the Lancer's base. "Hey, Yuzu?" He asked her. 'Huh?' She asked. "So, uh… Can we just go back to being friends? You really opened my eyes to the truth about my father, and I promise I'll never burden you again." Yuya told her. "Yeah, I'd like that." Yuzu said, smiling at him. She had missed hanging out with Yuya and Gong, and wished that he was with them. Please come back safe, Gong… She thought.
We see Riley trying to talk to Serena. "Serena…?" She asked. 'What is it?' Serena asked. "Well, I… I miss Crow, Gong, and Shay." Riley confessed. "I'm sure they'll be back soon." Serena said, trying to comfort the child. "I hope so. Those three cared for me when no one else did." Riley mentioned. "All the Lancers care about you." Serena tried to say. "They never acted like it." Riley responded bitterly. Serena's eyes widened in shock. "I do like you, though. And Yuzu, too. But everyone else besides Crow, Gong, Shay, and my brother doesn't care about me." Riley said, and she started to walk off. "Wait!" Serena called out.
Later, we see Yuto, Shay, and Kaito running toward

the towers. “They’re on the other side of the island!” Shay exclaimed. “I don’t care. We can manage.” Kaito said. Yuto led the way.

Gong, Sylvio, Crow, and Yugo are all running toward the towers as well. “Jeez, this island is huge!” Sylvio remarked. ‘I’ll say. These people don’t need to invade other dimensions when their island is this big!’ Crow pointed out. “Hey, look!” Yugo pointed, and saw Duel Academy students patrolling around. “Shoot. What do we do about them?” Crow asked. “We have to go a different way. C’mon, let’s go this way.” Gong said, pointing toward an alleyway. Yugo went on ahead, forcing the three Lancers to have to keep up.

Meanwhile, Ruri and Rin are seen running, as waiting it out was getting to be tedious. They decided to go the long way, as they didn’t know how much longer the students would be patrolling. They entered a long alleyway, and turned a corner.

Yuto, Shay, and Kaito are seen running into the same alleyway, with the other four Lancers not too far behind.

Ruri is surprised to turn the corner and see Yuto, Shay, and Kaito standing before her. It takes the four of them a second to process, as they can’t believe they found each other. “Yuto…?” Ruri asks in disbelief. Yuto and Ruri run toward each other, and

meet in a warm embrace where they kiss. ‘This is real. I can’t believe this is real… I’ve dreamed about this for so long.’ Ruri said, her hands cupping his cheeks. The two of them start crying. “I’ve missed you so much. You have no idea what I’ve had to go through to find you.” Yuto said to her, his voice shaking. Ruri gazed into her boyfriend’s eyes, and could see the grief in them. I’m sorry my absence caused you so much pain… You’ve already been through so much. She thought. Yuto couldn’t even think straight; he didn’t have the care to. All his focus was on Ruri.

Just then, Yugo, Gong, Crow, and Sylvio arrive, and Yugo and Rin’s eyes meet. “Rin Rin!” Yugo yells as he runs over toward her. They meet in an embrace as well. ‘Idiot. Where have you been all this time?’ She teased. “I’ve looked everywhere for you!” Yugo said, and she was surprised to see him crying. “I’ve missed you, too.” Rin said, pulling him closer. It feels like it’s been so long! I’ve spent so many sleepless nights alone drowning in my feelings… My grief over losing you, my guilt for not saving you, and my anger toward Yuri for taking you away… Yugo thought. He couldn’t put his thoughts into words, as he was too into the moment.

Ruri notices Shay and Kaito patiently waiting behind Yuto, and she gets up to greet them. “Shay!”

She exclaims, and they hug as well. ‘I’ve missed you… “Shay says, tears running down his cheeks.” I have, too.’ Ruri responds. She greets Kaito as well, and the XYZ friends all have one big group hug. “Are Saya and Allen…?” Ruri begins to ask. “They’re alive and well.” Kaito reassures her.

Just then, some Duel Academy students notice the Lancers with Ruri and Rin. “There they are!” One points out. “Let’s get out of here!” Gong yells, and they all start running back to the harbor. Yuto quickly takes Ruri’s hand, and they run together.

At the harbor, they notice the ship is gone. “Crap!” Sylvio yells. ‘Wait, we can get on that boat!’ Crow points to a boat about to leave. Unfortunately, Dennis arrives with some more Duel Academy students. “Dennis…?” Ruri asks in shock. Shay grits his teeth angrily and stands in front of her protectively. “What a lovely family reunion! What a shame it has to come to an end!” Dennis exclaims, activating his duel disk as if he is about to card Shay. Crow quickly pushes Shay to the side, protecting him from the purple light coming out of Dennis’ duel disk, but finds himself caught in it. “Nooo!” Sylvio yells out, running toward Crow. ‘Stay back!’ Crow warns. “I can’t lose you, too!” Sylvio shouts. “I’m protecting you, like I said I would!” Crow says back. “But…” Sylvio tries to protest. “You have to

live! Take down Duel Academy for me!" Crow yells, as he slowly disintegrates into the light. He yells out a final declaration of love, before he is carded. Sylvio shouts back that he loves him as well, before seeing a tiny card fall to the ground. Sylvio screams out in pain. As if some supernatural force felt bad for him, the wind picked up Crow's card and sent it to him, where he caught it. Sylvio stared at the card in horror, as he had a flashback to seeing his father in a card.

"How tragic." Dennis remarked. 'Shut up!' Sylvio yelled back with tears in his eyes. "Y'know, I always thought you two had something going on… But I didn't know what. I don't blame you, of course, because…" Dennis went on, but Gong stepped up to duel him. "Get on the ship! I'll hold him back!" Gong told the remaining Lancers. "I'm going to help you!" Sylvio declared. Gong glared at him. "No. Crow wants you to live, so you have to go!" Gong said, shoving him toward Kaito. Sylvio tried to protest, but Kaito held him back and dragged him along. "No! Gong!" Sylvio yelled, as he, Rin, Yugo, and the XYZ friends boarded the ship. The ship began to move, much to his dismay. "Gong! Get on the boat!" Sylvio yelled to his friend. Gong shook his head and waved goodbye, as he continued the duel. "Gooooong!" Syvio cried out as the ship

went to sea.
Suddenly, several people came out onto the ship and saw the Lancers. The Lancers prepared to duel, thinking that they were from Duel Academy. “Wait! We don’t want to fight!” A woman with blonde hair said. They lowered their duel disks. ‘Are you fighting against Duel Academy?’ She asked. Shay nodded. “My name is Alexis Tenjoin, and I run the Tenjoin Duel School. We were made specifically to rebel against Duel Academy.” Alexis explained. “Oh. We’re the Lancers, and I think we were made for the same purpose.” Yuto told her. “May I suggest an alliance be formed?” Alexis asked. “We’ll have to ask our leader about that.” Kaito told her.
Meanwhile, we see Gong lose to Dennis. “Oh what a shame… We were such good friends.” Dennis says. ‘Not anymore. I’m not friends with an agent of Duel Academy.’ Gong retorts. “How petty. Fighting till the end, huh?” Dennis said, preparing to card him. “Any last words?” He asked. Gong stubbornly didn’t respond. “I was actually trying to be nice for once! And you won’t even take it?” Dennis asked with annoyance, and activated the button on his duel disk. Gong closed his eyes, and felt himself being swallowed by the light. Guess this is it… I’m sorry dad, but I guess the bloodline ends with me. Gong pictured the Lancers, particularly Yuzu and Yuya. I

know you two are probably waiting on me… But I won't be there. I'm sorry. Those were Gong Strong's final thoughts before being carded. Dennis picked up Gong's card and considered throwing it in the ocean, but decided to keep it in his pocket instead.

On the ship ride back, Yugo is seen updating Rin about what all went down in the Synchro Dimension. "It was crazy! I went to jail with the Lancers, and we escaped! And we entered the Friendship Cup, and three of the Lancers beat Jack! And I guess now they're filthy rich!" Yugo said with energy and enthusiasm. I wonder what they'll use the money on… Yugo wondered. 'Oh, and then Roget killed the Council and took over, and Duel Academy started invading so we all fought back in an epic battle! This united the Commons and Topsiders for the first time, and then once we drove Duel Academy away, Jack became the new ruler!' Yugo continued. "Does that mean that the Synchro Dimension is no longer divided?" Rin asked. "Yeah!" Yugo exclaimed in excitement. This made Rin happy as well. "I never would've imagined Jack as the real king!" Rin remarked. "I know, right? It's a dream come true!" Yugo said.

Yuto, Shay, and Kaito are seen updating Ruri on all that's happened to them. Notably, despite all the hard things Yuto went through, he's trying to

sugarcoat it. However, Shay is upfront about all they had to do in order to get to this point. “Oh… I’m sorry that I caused you so much trouble.” Ruri apologized. Yuto gave Shay a hard glare. “No, don’t be. You shouldn’t apologize for being kidnapped. It wasn’t your fault.” Yuto insisted. Kaito updated Ruri on how there was a second raid on the XYZ Dimension.

‘If Duel Academy keeps attacking us, what do we do?’ Ruri asked. “Our leader, Declan Akaba, has a plan for us to infiltrate Duel Academy and stop this war once and for all.” Shay told her. “I want to help!” Ruri declared. Yuto looked at her, with worry in his eyes. “I know what you’re thinking, but I can’t bear to let you three handle any more on your own! I want to help!” Ruri insisted. This reminded Yuto of when she had tackled all those jobs once the invasion ended, which then triggered a memory of Yuzu wanting to join the Lancers. “Alright.” Yuto agreed at last, taking her hand in his. “I’ll make sure not to get taken again.” Ruri promised him, squeezing his hand tightly. “I’ll do a better job at staying by your side.” Yuto promised.

“Thanks!” Ruri said, and she smiled at Yuto. This made him blush, which made them all smile. ‘You two really are perfect for each other.’ Shay commented. “It’s been a while since I’ve seen you

like that!” Ruri chirped. “Still the same old Yuto.” Kaito agreed. Yuto didn’t respond to anyone, and just focused on his hand with Ruri’s. I love you. You’re the only one who can make me feel again.

Unfortunately, because Yugo and Rin were catching up and the XYZ friends were catching up, Sylvio was left to grieve alone. He pulls out his father’s card, and holds both it and Crow’s card in his hands. His tears fall on them both. Sylvio’s mind flashed back to all the fun times he had with Crow, the moments he and Crow were at their most vulnerable, and all the times they flirted. “I’m gonna have to make you a five course meal.” You haven’t made me my food yet, god dang it! Sylvio thought, and he clutched his crystalized pendant. ‘It’s beautiful.’ He remembers Crow complimenting it. “I guess it represents both my parents now…” Sylvio remembered what he had said back then. Now it represents you too, Crow.

And Gong… Why? Why did we have to lose them both? Sylvio thought, remembering Gong’s dedication and devotion to the group. He remembered admiring the way Gong never wavered in his duels, and always seemed to remain calm in any situation. I hope he’s okay… Sylvio thinks.

The ship eventually gets back, and the Lancers lead Alexis’ group to their base. Everyone is surprised to

see this new group. “Are you Declan Akaba?” Alexis asks. “I am.” Reiji responds. She asks to form an alliance, to which he agrees, and fills her in on the plan.
‘I’m glad to see that you succeeded in your mission.’ Reiji congratulates his returning Lancers. “We failed Crow and Gong…” Sylvio cries, showing them Crow’s card. Everyone gasps in shock. Riley starts to cry, and runs up to Shay’s side. “They’re gone?” She asks him. Shay nodded sadly.
“No!” Yuzu yells, as she and Yuya push their way up to Sylvio. ‘Where’s Gong’s card?’ Yuya asked. “He fought Dennis so that we could escape. I don’t know if he won or not.” Sylvio admitted. Yuya gritted his teeth. “We have to go back!” Yuya insisted. Reiji shook his head. “Not yet. We need to recover for a bit first.” He explained. “But Gong…” Yuya insisted. “I’m sure he’s capable on his own. We will leave the day after tomorrow.” Reiji insisted. What’s so special about the day after tomorrow that we can’t go back today, or tomorrow? Yuya thought angrily. Gong… Yuzu thought, thinking back to when she, Yuya, and Gong would hang out together as little kids. Gong. We’ll be back for you, I swear! Yuya thinks.

90. Origins: Yuzu Hiiragi

The episode begins with Yuzu as a baby, with her father grieving over the loss of his wife. “I’ll take care of you forever!” He declares sadly.

A timeskip happens, and Yuzu is five years old, and is trying to balance keeping up with the housework and keeping the Duel School running with her father. She and Syuzo work as a duo on the chores and brainstorm ways to advertise the Duel School. Notably, both places are a total mess, and they are barely scraping by. Yuzu is stressed about all the work she has to do with her father every day, and she goes home at night crying herself to sleep. She seems to have a picture of her mother on her side table. Why did you have to leave us like this? Yuzu wonders.

We see Yusho, Syuzo, Yuzu, and Yuya together outside of the Yusho Duel School. “You two are growing up so fast!” Yusho says. Yuzu and Yuya nod. ‘You two will be such a good couple.’ Yusho says. “Ewww!” Yuzu says, sticking her tongue out in disgust. “Yuzu! Don’t be rude!” Syuzo scolds her. Yuya says nothing, and shyly just stands there. He seems somewhat hurt by Yuzu’s reaction.

Yuzu and Syuzo are seen at the Duel School again. Yuzu is forced to teach a class on how to activate spells and traps while her father is away. She has major stage fright, and can barely explain what it means. “I don’t understand!” A kid calls. Yuzu winces, and tries her best to remember what to say. “Well… Spells are in different categories… Normal, Continuous, Equip, Quick-play, Field, and Ritual… And, uh…” The scene is meant to give you second hand embarrassment.

Later, we see Yuzu hanging out with a five year old Yuya and Gong. “I’m tired of my dad leaving me with jobs to do!” Yuzu complains to them. ‘Yeah. My dad puts so much pressure on me.’ Gong says, relating to her comment. “C’mon guys, lighten up! I’m sure that it is not that bad.” Yuya says with a smile. “It is.” Yuzu says. “My dad argues with my mom a lot, but he’s still a nice guy!” Yuya points out.

In a timeskip of one year, we see Yuzu comforting Yuya as he is crying. “My dad disappeared! And people are calling him a coward!” Yuya cried. Yuzu hugged him tightly. ‘I’m sure he’ll be back sometime.’ She tried to reassure him. “Really?” Yuya asked. “Yeah.”

Later that day, we see Syuzo having a serious talk with Yuzu. “Honey, please don’t tell Yuya this,

but… Yusho wasn’t who he seemed. He is not a good person.” He explained. ‘What? But he was always so nice to us!’ Yuzu protested. “I can’t disclose all the details, but please know that he isn’t a good person. The day he left was the day we were free of his lies.” Syuzo told her. “Understand?” He asked sternly. Yuzu quickly nodded.

“Oh, and make sure you stay by Yuya’s side. He’ll need you a lot.” Syuzo told Yuzu. ‘I know.’ She responded. “You two are gonna be such a cute couple someday!” Syuzo suddenly gushed. “What? No we are not!” Yuzu protested angrily. “Why not? You clearly like him. Why else would you hug him all the time?” Syuzo asked. “Because we are friends!” Yuzu pointed out. “Right…” Syuzo commented. Yuzu looked away. What if he’s right? What if I do love Yuya? I’ve never had a crush on anyone!

A montage of Yuzu comforting Yuya over the years ensues, and she is now overworked with running her duel school, taking care of her house, and carrying Yuya’s emotions. One night when Yuzu is 12, she goes home to her bed no longer crying; just exhausted. I hope Yuya gets better one day… But I don’t mind being there for him. That’s what friends do for each other… And my father seems to keep wanting us together, anyway.

While hanging out with Yuya in a park, Yuzu sees a woman and a man kissing. That's what love is like? Then why don't I have the desire to kiss Yuya? She wonders. My dad can't be right. I don't love him!
Later, Yuzu is once again comforting Yuya about his father. "Yusho isn't as bad as people say! I know he isn't!" Yuya yells while crying. Yuzu hugs him, but knows that Yuya is wrong. I'm not allowed to tell him the truth… I just hope that he moves on… 'You still have your mom and your friends.' Yuzu reassures him. "They can't replace my dad!" Yuya yells.
Another time skip happens, where Yuzu is 14. She is hanging out with Gong without Yuya. "Gong, I hope one day Yuya is alright." Yuzu admits. 'Yeah. He's a nice guy and all, but hearing him talk about his burdens for the millionth time can be hard to listen to at times.' Gong points out. This makes Yuzu mad. "What do you mean? Don't you understand what he's going through?" Yuzu asks. "Of course I do, but it can be mentally draining!" Gong admits. "Yoko, Syuzo, you, and I are the only people he has left! Don't say things like that!" Yuzu scolds him. "I'm sorry." Gong apologizes. Yuya's been through too much already, he doesn't need you doubting him.
We see Yuzu and Yuya enter high school together. "It's our first day!" Yuya says with a smile. 'Are you

sure you’re alright?’ Yuzu asks. “Of course I am! I’ve never been better!” Yuya says. She looks away sadly. Why isn’t he honest about his feelings? Yuya runs ahead of her, which prompts her to follow him. “Slow down! I’m trying to keep up!” She yells. Yuzu eventually loses him, and is lost in her new school. “Great.” Yuzu mutters. She sighs to herself. I guess I’m the only one who can keep up with Yuya. I’ll chase after him for as long as he needs… Because he needs me! Yuzu vows.

91. Awakening

The episode begins with Yuzu in the Lancers' base. Time has moved so fast… I can't believe how much things have changed… She remembers how it felt like just yesterday when she and Yuya were in the Standard Dimension together. That was back when I was burdening himself with his problems… But my whole world changed when I met Yuto.

Yuzu thought back to first seeing Yuto, how shocked she was when he took her place in the duel and how much he looked like Yuya. To think that I used to be afraid of him… I used to think he was some sketchy guy! That's funny to think about now. She remembered how she dueled Masumi, and how she lost because she was so overwhelmed by all the confusing events. I thought I was going crazy… Yuya and Yuto looked the same back then, and my bracelet was being weird, I felt guilty for almost causing the school to close, and I was still stuck as Yuya's little hanger on. I think she helped open my eyes to the truth; Yuya wasn't my responsibility. I needed to better myself in my dueling.

Yuzu thought about her relationship with Yuya further. How strange… Why was Yusho and my dad

so into shipping us together? We were just friends. We were just little kids. Were they pressuring us into a relationship? She thought of how Yuya had confessed at one of the worst possible times. How long had Yuya had those feelings? Was it pressured into him by his father? If so, then why did I never feel that way toward him?

Since getting older, Yuzu thought she had never been in love. She thought that she was strange for that. People always describe it so strangely… You blush around a boy? You get nervous? You want to touch them…? What? Even in books I've read, there was love everywhere in it. It just… Never made sense to me. I couldn't think of any boys that I had any feelings toward whatsoever… But…

Yuzu pictured Serena, and something felt strange. This is love. I know it is. Serena changed my life, too. I didn't realize it for so long, because I didn't even know that it was possible. But after seeing Crow and Sylvio together, I guess it is. Why did my father try to force Yuya and I together, then? Why did I never know about this growing up? Yuzu wondered. This has to be what people describe it as. It's like… Serena and I are in sync, as if we were performing an eternal dance. I feel like we can achieve anything together. She makes me so happy… Happier than Yuya, or any boy ever has.

Yuzu felt herself blushing. And there's the blush… She realized, and she smiled.

I guess… Despite the crazy journey it's been, I don't regret anything. I don't regret becoming a Lancer, or being a part of a war, or any of it… Not when I got to meet Serena. She opened my eyes, too. She proved to me that Duel Academy's own students weren't aware of what they were doing… So I can't help but feel bad for them.

Yuzu pictured Yuto. I hope we don't have to kill any Duel Academy students… I don't want to see Yuto hurting anyone… Her brain flashes back to what Yuto had said to her over and over again, "I don't want to see you hurt again." At the time it was so confusing. This sketchy looking guy being so polite? Still, I understand now. It's against his nature to hurt people, but he seems to have no choice. Poor guy… I'm glad he has Ruri back, though. He was right back then. She really does look like me. Yuzu looks over to Yuto and Ruri, where they're holding each other close, and Yuto appears to be smiling. I'm happy for him… He deserves so much happiness in this world. I'm glad we met… Or else I never would've been a Lancer, or have met Serena.

Later that evening, we see Serena walking over to Yuzu. "Hey, can I talk to you in private?" She asks. Yuzu nods. Her mind flashes back to when Yuya

confessed to her. ‘So… I don’t really know how to explain this, but… Before Crow died, he helped me learn something; I liked girls… And it was okay. Growing up, I never knew anyone like me, or like Crow and Sylvio. I don’t know if it was because I was a child soldier, or if it was shamed upon… Still, I know one thing is for certain. I like you, Yuzu.’ Serena explained. Time seemed to slow down for Yuzu. Wait, what? Serena… Likes me? And she had a similar experience that I did? “I do too, Serena!” Yuzu said, her eyes tearing up.

“Hey, are you alright?” Serena asked. Yuzu wiped the tears from her face. ‘I just thought that I was so strange and weird, but it’s so relieving to know that you went through the same thing.’ Yuzu explained. Serena hugged Yuzu tight. “We’re not the only ones. Crow told me that this wasn’t uncommon. There’s nothing strange about it.” Serena reassured her. “That’s good.” Yuzu replied, and smiled at Serena.

That night, Yuzu, Serena, Ruri, and Rin meet for the first time. “I’ve heard a lot about you both.” Yuzu commented. ‘Really?’ Ruri asked. “Ohhhh I’m sure you have.” Rin said, looking over at Yugo.

They proceed to get to know each other better, and became friends almost instantly. “I still don’t get why we all look similar?” Rin wondered. ‘I don’t either, but it doesn’t really matter. We’re not related,

so I guess we're just doppelgangers.' Serena said. "There has to be a reason. Why else would the Professor try to kidnap us?" Rin pointed out. "Honestly, the fact that this old guy went to all that work to try and take us is so creepy." Yuzu said bitterly. "Oh no… Does that mean he started the XYZ invasion just to find me?" Ruri asked, fear glittered in her gaze. Serena and Yuzu knew that Dennis had been the one to greenlight the invasion, but they couldn't be sure why it happened. "I'm not sure. I hope that's not the reason." Yuzu said. "I hope the Professor gets what he deserves when we invade Duel Academy!" Serena declares angrily.

The episode ends with Sylvio still crying over Crow and Gong. Yuto walks over to him, putting his hands on his friend's shoulders. "I'm sorry that happened to you." Yuto said, his eyes full of grief. Sylvio looked up at the soldier, and flashed back to when Yuto had last looked at him like that. 'Please don't look at me like that. I'm already sad enough. You don't have to comfort me… "Sylvio responded. Yuto seemed to understand." If you want to feel better, then channel your feelings into anger toward Dennis for what he did.' He told Sylvio. Sylvio nodded, and started trembling in rage. "Dennis will pay for what he did to Crow!"

92. The Night Before...

The episode begins with Riley walking up to Yuzu. “Hey… Can I ask for a favor?” Riley asked. She nodded. ‘Of course! What do you need?’ Yuzu asked, getting down to Riley’s level. “So… It’s my brother’s birthday today, and I want to surprise him…” She told Yuzu. “Oh? How old is Declan turning?” She asked the child. “Seventeen.” Riley replied. “Aww! That’s such a sweet idea! Of course I’ll help you.” Yuzu agreed. Riley smiled. “Thank you.”

Yuzu went up to Serena to tell her what Riley had told her. “Where is Declan right now?” Yuzu wondered. ‘I don’t know. He always seems to mysteriously vanish whenever we establish a base.’ Serena said. “Yeah. It’s like he’s in and out without us realizing.” Yuzu said. “Well, I guess that gives us more time to prepare.” Serena said. “Right! We should head to the nearest store to get a dessert!” Yuzu declared. Serena agreed.

Meanwhile, Riley walked up to Shay and told him about Reiji’s birthday celebration. “You want help from everyone to surprise him?” Shay asked. Riley nodded. He sighed. “Alright, I’m in.” Shay agreed.

We later see Shay tell Yuto, Ruri, and Kaito about this. Yuto tells Sylvio, Ruri tells Rin, Rin tells Yugo, Kaito tells the Resistance, Riley tells Alexis, and Alexis tells her Duel School. “Wait, none of us have a present!” Yugo exclaimed. The room fell into an awkward silence. ‘Okay, so what should we get him?’ Rin asked. “Do we even know what the guy likes?” Shay asked. Nobody responded. “The guy’s so mysterious! He hardly tells us anything about him!” Yuya admitted. “True. It’s hard to even imagine Declan enjoying something. He’s so stone-faced.” Yugo remarked.

“Okay, well… Does he have hobbies?” Ruri asked. Nobody knew. ‘What if Declan’s secretly into dirty magazines?’ Yugo suggests. “Yugo!” Rin scolds him. “What? It could be anything! We don’t know!” Yugo argues. Everyone glares at Yugo.

Everyone tries to imagine Reiji actually enjoying something, but it’s difficult. Yuto tries to imagine Reiji drawing, but he can’t imagine him having fun doing it. Sylvio tries to imagine Reiji eating something good, but then he remembers that Reiji ate with the Lancers multiple times and never had a hint of a smile on his face. Yuya tries to imagine Reiji having some sort of outlandish hobby, like surfboarding, but just gets a cursed image in his mind instead.

“Reiji likes photography. That’s why I play a camera deck.” Riley finally says. ‘Perfect! Someone should go get a camera!’ Yugo suggested. “And where would we find that?” Yuto asked. “I don’t know! I’m sure there are cameras sold somewhere here!” Yugo remarked. Everyone exchanged glances with each other and sighed. “Okay Lancers, we have a mission. Operation camera finding is a go!” Yugo declared.

Yugo ordered the Resistance, Alexis’ Duel School, Riley, and Sylvio to stay behind and try to decorate the room. “Plus, if you see Declan coming, you can distract him!” Yugo pointed out.

Yuya, Yuto, Shay, Kaito, Ruri, Yugo, and Rin went out to look for the nearest store. The XYZ friends stayed together, while Yuya, Yugo, and Rin went somewhere else. “Remember, we have trackers on our duel disks so we won’t get lost!” Shay reminded them. They nodded and went their separate ways.

Later, we see Yuzu and Serena enter a grocery store. “Okay, is there a dessert section?” Yuzu asked. Serena nodded, and pointed to the other side of the store. ‘Alright!’

Meanwhile, the XYZ crew enters a hardware store. “Welcome!” An old guy at the counter says. “Whatcha looking for?” He asked. “Do you have any cameras here?” Ruri politely asked. “Cameras?

Oh yeah, they're in the back." He says, pointing to aisle 9. "Thank you!" Ruri says, and the group goes to that aisle.
"What the heck? These things are $100 bucks?!" Shay declares angrily. 'What did you expect they'd be?' Kaito asked. "I don't know!" Shay yelled. "Well… The cheapest one is $39.99…" Yuto says, pointing to a bright pink and white colored camera. "It'll have to do." Kaito said in a serious tone. "Isn't it a kid's toy?" Ruri pointed out. "Hopefully he won't notice…" Yuto said seriously. Ruri giggled. "It's funny seeing how serious you all are about this!" She said. "Well of course, Ruri. We have to take this matter seriously. If things go wrong, it could ruin things with Declan… And we don't want him as our enemy when we're this close to Duel Academy…" Shay said, with his brows furrowed. "Is he serious?" Ruri whispered to Yuto. "He's always serious." Yuto whispered back. "He didn't used to be." Ruri muttered.
We see Yugo, Rin, and Yuya enter an electronics store. "Wow! Look at all of this!" Yugo said, admiring all the expensive technology. 'It's just like what the Topsiders have!' Rin exclaimed. "Guys, we can't get carried away!" Yuya reminded them. "Yeah, yeah whatever… Oh! Rin, look at this!" Yugo says, pointing at something. Yuya facepalms.

“Why am I the voice of reason here?” He wonders out loud.
Back at the base, Sylvio and Riley are wondering how they should decorate. “We don’t exactly have any streamers or balloons…” Sylvio points out. ‘We can make streamers.’ Riley says. “Out of what? We don’t have anything!” Sylvio exclaims. Riley walks into another room, and comes back with toilet paper. “You’ve gotta be kidding me…” Sylvio says, his jaw on the floor. Riley shakes her head. “I’m not. I know how to do origami. Start folding.” She says, tearing off a long strand of toilet paper for both of them. “I can’t believe I’m doing this…” Sylvio mutters.
Meanwhile, the XYZ gang has a money problem. “Great, so what do we do?” Shay asks. ‘We could always consider stealing.’ Kaito points out. “No!” Yuto and Ruri speak in unison. “We may have to…” Shay admits. “But we already have Duel Academy as an enemy! Do we really want to add a store manager as another?” Yuto asked, glaring at Shay in annoyance. “What are they gonna do about it?” Shay asked. “Arrest us, report us to Duel Academy, we become prisoners at Duel Academy, and then get executed.” Yuto started listing off the worst case scenarios. Ruri hugged Yuto to comfort him.
“Maybe instead of stealing we should find a way to earn money!” Ruri suggested. ‘How?’ The three

boys asked. “Maybe we could ask people around if they could pay us if we did some housework?” She suggested. “I’d rather do that than commit theft.” Yuto agreed. Shay and Kaito begrudgingly agreed, and the four of them exited the store.

Back with Yugo, Rin, and Yuya, Yuya has given up on trying to get the couples’ attention and has started searching on his own. This feels less like preparing for a surprise birthday party and more like being a third wheel on a date! Yuya thinks. He finally finds a camera, but is stunned at the price. “$130?” Yuya screams. “Shhhhh!” A random customer yells at him. “Sorry!” He says back. None of us have enough money for this! What am I gonna do? An idea pops in his head. What if I duel on the street and earn money that way? He immediately runs out of the store, completely forgetting about Yugo and Rin.

In the grocery store, Yuzu and Serena are ordering up. “This cake looks delicious!” Yuzu exclaims. ‘Hopefully it’s a flavor Declan likes.’ Serena comments. “I mean, it’s marble, so it should be?” Yuzu says, clearly unsure. They pay at the register, as Yuzu still has money from back in the Standard Dimension. They head back to the base.

Meanwhile, Riley, Sylvio, the Resistance, and Alexis’ Duel School have worked together to fill the

base with toilet paper streamers and decoration everywhere. “We should write a banner and sign all our names.” Riley suggests. ‘Is it gonna be made out of toilet paper?’ Sylvio asks. Riley shakes her head. “No, we’re running low on that.” She says, taking out some markers. “How do you have markers?” Sylvio asks. “That’s not important.” Riley says, and she starts writing on the walls, badly misspelling every word. “Haupy Berathy Die Reiji! Yor tha besst brohetr!” It read. Sylvio noticed that the two things that were spelled correctly were Reiji and Riley’s names. “You wrote ‘die Reiji?’” Sylvio shouted. “I did?” Riley asked. Sylvio pronounced it exactly as what Riley wrote. “You wrote it in permanent marker, didn’t you?” Sylvio asked. Riley nodded. Sylvio sighed. “I guess I’ll write my name…” He said, signing his name on the wall. He decided to write Crow and Gong’s names as well.

Later, we see Ruri and Yuto working in the kitchen doing household jobs for an elderly lady. They seem to be working together very well. “Thank you very much…” The lady thanks them. “Our pleasure.” Yuto responds. He and Ruri seem to be happy working together, despite their strange circumstances.

Unfortunately, outside the house, Shay and Kaito are having trouble working together. “It’s been so long

since I’ve had to weed…” Kaito admits. Shay is losing his patience, and declares ‘screw this’ and summons Rise Falcon. The summon of Rise Falcon causes extreme wind gusts, which pulls up all the weeds and the entire flower bed. “Problem solved!” Shay declared. Kaito put a hand on his shoulder. “What are we gonna do about that?” Kaito said, pointing to the flowers that were all uprooted.

On the way back to the base, Yuzu and Serena see Reiji in the distance. “Oh no! We can’t let him in yet!” Yuzu exclaims. ‘How do we distract him?’ Serena asks. Yuzu runs over toward him. “Declan!” She shouts. Reiji turns to her. “What is it?” He asks calmly. “You have to duel me! A bug from Duel Academy has taken over my brain!” Yuzu says dramatically. “What the…?” Serena wonders. What kind of distraction is that? Furthermore, where did she get that from? Who would be ridiculous enough to make something like that to inspire Yuzu to do that? Serena wonders. Despite her obviously fake acting, Reiji activates his duel disk seriously. “Don’t worry Serena, I’ll take care of this.” Reiji says calmly, activating his duel disk. “Hahahaha! I’ll defeat you!” Yuzu declares.

Back at the base, Sylvio is getting anxious. “Where is everybody? It’s been hours! What if Declan gets back before them?” He wonders out loud. He

decides to use one of Riley's markers to write everyone's names on the wall, just in case they don't arrive in time.

Meanwhile, Yuya is out on the street summoning his Hip Hippos and riding them around. "Ladies, gentlemen, and everybody in-between! It's the show of the century!" He yells. Everyone passing by gives him strange looks. Man… This isn't working! Am I just not entertaining enough? I thought that I would've had enough practice given how much I copied my father…

Suddenly, a random family walks up to him. "Ohhh! Hippos!" A little girl says. 'How much is it to ride them?' The mom asks. "$10 per person." Yuya says. The family of four pays, giving Yuya $40. He lets them ride around for a while, and likes seeing the joy on their faces. People around him see this, and a line starts to form. Uh oh… It's so long that I might be held here for too long! Yuya realizes. He decides to give everyone a discount so that he can get through people quicker, and summons more hippos so people can go at once. Finally, he manages to get through the line and gets $200.

Yuya races back to the store, and purchases the camera. Oh! I forgot about Yugo and Rin! He thinks. He finds them in aisle 3, looking at the newest computers. "C'mon guys, I've got the camera."

Yuya says, dragging them back.
Meanwhile, the XYZ gang manages to finish their jobs around the house. “Thank you so much! You’re all such dears.” The elderly lady says, and she pays them $45. “Thank you for your time.” Ruri and Yuto say, but Kaito and Shay are already out the door. The quartet start to head to the hardware store.
At the store, they manage to purchase the camera and start heading back. “Who knew one camera would be so much work?” Shay says. ‘Well, it’ll be worth it for Declan! He deserves an expensive gift for all that he’s done to help us.’ Ruri says. “That’s true…” Shay admits.
Back with Yuzu and Serena, Reiji defeats her very quickly. “Yuzu? Are you alright? Are you still being controlled?” Reiji asks. “No, I’m fine now!” Yuzu reassures him. Serena looks behind her, and notices that all the Lancers have finally returned. She breathes a sigh of relief. We stalled long enough.
In the base, everyone is happy to be back. “Wait! We got two cameras?” Yuya realized. ‘Great, so we didn’t need to pay all that money!’ Yugo exclaims. “You didn’t even do anything!” Yuya yells. “Quick! We need to wrap the gift! I see Serena and Yuzu stalling Declan!” Sylvio points out. “We don’t have gift wrap.” Ruri says. Riley hands Sylvio the last roll of toilet paper. “Seriously?” He asks. Yuya and Yugo

try their best to hold back from laughing. “Come on, Sylvio! Wrap that camera!” Yuya yells in encouragement. Knowing he has no choice, Sylvio starts wrapping the camera up the best he can. Everyone yells their encouragement, despite the ridiculousness of the situation.

Sylvio miraculously wraps the camera completely in toilet paper. It looks terrible, but it works. “Good job.” Yuto says to Sylvio afterwards. “Look! Declan’s coming! Hide!” Yuya yells, but there’s no good hiding spots. They decide to all just crowd around a corner and turn the lights off.

Reiji opens the door with Yuzu and Serena behind him. The lights are off… Hopefully that means they’re ready. Serena thinks. Reiji didn’t say anything, or seem to be caught off guard at all that he couldn’t see anyone. He turned the lights on, and everyone came out of their hiding spot. “Surprise!” Everyone said. Reiji’s only reaction was his eyes widening in shock. ‘Happy birthday.’ Riley said quietly. Why does she gotta sound so depressed when she says it? Yugo wonders. Reiji’s face softened. “Did you set this up?” Reiji deduced. Riley nodded. “Thank you.” Reiji said, and he smiled at Riley. “That’s the first time I’ve seen him smile…” Sylvio whispered to Yuto. “Hey! We helped, too!” Shay yelled.

The Lancers showed Reiji the two presents wrapped in toilet paper. “That’s certainly resourceful.” Reiji commented, with a hint of amusement in his voice. He ‘unwrapped’ the two gifts at the same time, one for each hand. Reiji’s expression turned into a true look of shock after opening the presents, which was the most emotion the Lancers had ever seen from him. “Thank you for this.” Reiji said, holding up the cameras. “No problem!” Everyone said together. “I would suggest that we all take a picture together.” He said, and everyone gathered in front of the wall with everyone’s names.

Everyone somehow fit into the picture, and it printed out within a few minutes. “I appreciate the message, Riley.” Reiji said, which made her happy. How could he tell what that was immediately? Sylvio wondered.

‘Hey Declan… “Serena said, showing him the marble cake. Shortly after, everyone was given a piece of cake.” Do we want to sing happy birthday?’ Yuzu asked. Reiji nodded. “If you want.” Everyone proceeds to sing at different speeds and tones, much to his amusement. “Man, that was awful!” Yugo said after they finished.

Reiji smiled at them. “This was very generous of all of you to set up… Considering what I put you all through.” He said. ‘We joined your group willingly.’

Shay pointed out. “Well, you’ve all become a found family…” Reiji pointed out. Much better than my real family. He thought. “And I thought that because you’re all my family now, you can all call me by my real name: Reiji.”

Everyone proceeded to celebrate the rest of the day. Reiji spent the rest of his time taking pictures with his new camera. He took pictures of the Lancers as they had fun together, and he smiled as he looked at them. They really have become a found family. I think I can try to show my emotions around them now. Reiji pictured Riley’s face. Seeing your journey in forging your own identity and experiencing your own emotions has really helped me. Thank you, Riley.

93. The Beginning of the End

In the morning, everyone was tense. They knew today was the day. Today is… Yuya thought. The day we face Duel Academy! Yuzu realized. Today is the day we end the war for good! Yuto thought. Duel Academy will pay! I'll exact my revenge on them all! Shay thought. Dennis… You're mine! I'll avenge Crow and Gong! Sylvio thought. Yuri… I'll get my revenge on you! Yugo vowed. Father, the time has arrived. You're going to regret all the things you've done to us! Reiji thought. Duel Academy's gonna regret ruining my life! Their reign of glory will end! Serena thought. I'll get my revenge for my comrades! Kaito thought. I hope we survive… Riley thought. Is this really it? Will the war finally end? Will I finally get to go home and rebuild? Ruri wondered. The Professor's gonna pay for being such a creep! Rin thought.

The ship ride was tense, as everyone was nervous. Feelings of vengeance, anxiety, and determination were heightened among the group.

"I'll protect you." Yuto promised Ruri. "I'll protect you, too." She said, holding his hand.

'Let's get through this and go home!' Yugo declared

to Rin. “Yeah!” She agreed.
“I’ll stay with you.” Serena reassured Yuzu. “Thank you.” She said, hugging Serena one last time before the ship made it to the island.
“This is it, Riley.” Reiji told his sister. She nodded.
“Let’s get our revenge, Kaito.” Shay declared. Kaito agreed.
As the ship docked and the doors opened, the Lancers, Resistance, and Alexis’ group raced out onto the island, not caring if they were being discreet or not. “You don’t have to be stealthy. We want Duel Academy to know we’re here.” They all remembered Reiji telling them. Surprisingly, no one was patrolling the harbor. Everyone split up from here into their given groups: Team Northfront, (Yuya, Reiji, Yuto, and Yugo) Team Eastfront, (Sylvio, Yuzu, Serena, Ruri, and Rin) Team Westfront, (Shay, Kaito, and Riley) and Team Southfront. (the Resistance and Alexis’ Duel School)
Reiji’s group started heading into Duel Academy, purposefully summoning monsters to cause destruction to the school. Their group’s goal was to get to the Professor, no matter what. They followed Reiji’s lead as they held back Duel Academy students. The three dimensional dragons broke through the walls of the school, causing fear and

panic to ensue among the students. They were so afraid that they didn't fight back, resulting in Team Northfront to keep going without any interference.
Team Eastfront managed to get into the school fairly quickly, but they intercepted a class of students trying to fight back. However, Ruri and Rin held them off with their monsters and their swarming effects.
Team Westfront brutally made their way through the school, with Blaze Falcon and Galaxy Eyes Cipher Dragon setting the insides ablaze. Kaito and Shay made sure to protect Riley from the heat.
Team Southfront held back the Obelisk Force from outside of Duel Academy, as their job was to prevent any more reinforcements from coming into the school. Alexis' powerful Rituals seemed to hold them back for the time being.
Back with Team Eastfront, they run into some trouble. "Oh my god! We found some more opportunities for gift cards!" The Tyler sisters say, as they approach the five Lancers. 'Go on ahead, Sylvio! We'll hold them off! Find Dennis and beat him for us!' Yuzu ordered. Sylvio nodded and ran ahead, summoning multiple Abyss Actors to protect himself. "How convenient. All the R pieces are right here… While you won't be turned into cards, you will be coming along with us." Gloria told them.

The Bracelet girls all activated their duel disks. “So it’s two on four? That’s fine.” Grace said, and she and Gloria began the duel.
Team Westfront ran into some enemies along the way as well. “Well well well…” An ominous voice said, making Shay, Kaito, and Riley stop in their tracks. Kaito clenched his fist. I remember that voice! His eyes flashed with anger, as he saw a man with a black coat approaching them. ‘Some new pieces of prey to hunt… “The man said with an evil grin.” Who is that?’ Shay asked Kaito. “He’s the one who killed my family.” Kaito said through gritted teeth. The Bounty Hunter, known only as Hell Kaiser! “I remember you… It seems you’ve garnered quite the reputation since then. You’ve become known as the fearsome mercenary of the XYZ. You have quite the bounty on your head.” The man said to Kaito. Shay and Kaito prepared to duel.
Just then, Aster appeared from behind the man. “Would you like some help, Zane?” Aster offered. ‘Sure. Let’s crush these two XYZ rats for good!’ Zane replied. Riley quickly activated her duel disk, locking Aster into a duel with her. “Hey!” Aster exclaimed, angry that he got pulled out of the possibility of a 2 vs 2 duel. “You sure about this Riley?” Shay asked. Riley nodded. “You don’t know what you’re getting into, kid!” Aster yelled, and

began the duel. Similarly, Zane's duel with Kaito and Shay started.
Back with Sylvio, we see him turn a corner, and runs into Dennis. "You!" He says through gritted teeth. 'Ah, back so soon, are we?' Dennis asked, activating his duel disk. Before he has the opportunity to card Sylvio, he locks Dennis into a duel; meaning he can't card him unless he loses. "Ah well, it was worth a shot." Dennis said. "Shut up! I'm taking you down for Crow and Gong!" Sylvio yelled. "Gong? You mean this?" Dennis asked, showing Sylvio Gong's card. Sylvio gasped. "You'll pay for this!" He yells, starting the duel.
Meanwhile, Team Northfront manages to get close to the Professor's throne room. "Stop! Where do you think you're going?" They all turn to see Yuri grinning at them creepily. Yuto and Yugo activate their duel disks. 'You go on to find the Professor!' Yuto tells Yuya and Reiji, who quickly run ahead. "You creep! You'll pay for what you did!" Yugo shouts at him. "You deserve the misery of the battlefield." Yuto says, his calming presence slowly evaporating. Yugo notices this, but doesn't mind, as he wants revenge on Yuri as well. "Please! I enjoy the battlefield! I enjoy seeing my opponent's faces contort in pain and fear as I murder them!" Yuri says while laughing. "You &%#$!" Yuto shouts at him,

and the duel begins.
Up ahead with Yuya and Reiji, they enter the throne room to see Leo Akaba standing, as if he were expecting them. “Leo…” Reiji says through gritted teeth. The Professor narrowed his eyes at his son. ‘How petty of you to start a ruckus throughout all the dimensions just for being upset at me leaving you… “He mocks.” This isn’t about that! This is about all the crimes you’ve committed! Do you know how many people you’ve hurt, just from your invasions alone? How many people you’ve killed, how many families you’ve broken apart?’ Reiji shouts at him. “I don’t care.” Leo says curtly. “I would’ve thought that the Professor of a Duel School would be a little nicer!” Yuya interrupts.
“And I would’ve thought that you would have grown a backbone.” A voice says. Yuya looks up to see Yusho Sakaki riding his monster above them. His face twists in shock and horror. ‘Dad? You’re with Duel Academy?’ Yuya asks. “Of course I am.” Yusho responds coldly. “Do you know how much pain you put me through? I did my best to do as you taught me, to spread your beliefs onto others, but it was wrong! And you know how difficult it was for my friends to set me straight?” Yuya yelled at him. “I’m surprised you still have friends.” Yusho retorted. Yuya clenched his fist. “I can’t believe

you’re like this! The dad that I looked up to for years is working with a genocidal maniac!” Yuya screams out, his voice shaking in rage and sadness. “I bet you feel like a fool for looking up to me, then.” Yusho taunted. “I do…” Yuya admitted.
Yusho and Leo activated their duel disks. “So you want a 2 vs 2?” Yuya asked. Yusho shook his head. “No. This is a family matter. Father vs son.” Yusho replied, locking Yuya into a duel. Leo locked Reiji into a duel as well, and the fight to end the war truly began. (Keep in mind these duels happen at relatively the same time)
‘Leo, I need answers.’ Reiji demanded. “About what?” The Professor asked. “About everything! Why would you do such terrible things? Why did you kidnap the girls? Why did you leave? Explain yourself!” Reiji snapped. “Fine, I shall humor your request before I am forced to kill you… We will go back to the beginning, back to the origin…” Leo said, beginning his story. “Return to the origin!” That’s what he wrote in the Revival Zero file! Reiji realized.

94. Origins: Leo Akaba Part 1

The episode begins with a much younger Leo Akaba, and an 18 year old girl with maroon hair and a silver bracelet. “Ray! I’m so proud of you for making it into the pro leagues!” Leo says. She smiles at him. ‘Thanks, dad!’ Ray says. “I gotta go! Yuichi’s waiting for me!” Ray tells her father as she leaves. Leo waves goodbye. “Yuichi Kuruta is a fine young man! Tell him that he has my approval!” Leo calls out.

We see Leo Akaba working hard at creating a virtual reality system where you can physically touch your monsters and feel the blasts from any attack. He purposefully planned to use this system for the hottest game in the world; Duel Monsters. Conveniently, Leo had a daughter who was a pro at dueling and who taught him everything about the game. How convenient that the duel monsters that were virtually summoned just so happened to be perfectly compatible with Leo’s in-progress new virtual system.

One day, as Ray and Leo were testing out his virtual system, they made an intriguing discovery: the monsters seemed to have spirits! “Look! The

monster’s eye is moving where I move!” Leo pointed out. “Wow! So they have souls just like living beings…” Ray realized.

Once Leo’s new virtual reality system was finished, he and his daughter celebrated with a cake. “I think I’ll call it the ARC system.” He declared, biting into the cake. “I’m excited to use it! Riding on a monster sounds so awesome!” Ray exclaimed.

When Leo published his new ARC system, it became a huge success. Everyone in the dueling world considered the invention to be the “greatest use of tech within this century,” and some even said that it was “the most life-changing invention since the invention of the computer.” Leo won several awards for his creation, and became a millionaire off of just the profits alone. His ARC system was very successful with the game of Duel Monsters, but it was also used for other things in day-to-day life.

Shortly after the ARC System was created, Leo watched his daughter dueling in the pro circuit riding her monsters. She really looks like she’s having a blast. He thinks. Leo was aware that his daughter’s boyfriend Yuichi had recently become a pro duelist as well.

However, Yuichi Kuruta was so different from anyone else Leo had ever met. He’s such a peculiar young man… Always so curious about pushing the

limits of Duel Monsters, and caring so much about what the audience sees him as… Yuchi's such a gentleman around Ray. Leo thought. Yuichi became known as the pro duelist who "always listened to his fans," and they suggested that he change his name to Z-ARC. From then on, his name was known as Z-ARC.

As time went on, the audience started demanding more and more from pro duelists, as they were curious to see just how real the ARC System was. To test this, they demanded that duels become more violent, more brutal, and more entertaining. Most pro duelists didn't listen to this, as they feared what damage the ARC System could create. Z-ARC, however, was not like most pro duelists. Even when his girlfriend Ray tried her best to make her duels as non-violent as possible, it would be difficult given how you could feel the pain in every attack.

Leo observed his daughter's relationship with Yuichi subtly start to take a drastic change. As Ray did her best to show mercy to her opponents out of fear of hurting them with the ARC System, Z-ARC listened to the audience's growing demand for more brutal duels. This eventually led to Z-ARC injuring all his opponents, which shocked the world. Some people hated Z-ARC for hurting others, but the vast majority praised him for constantly pushing the

limits and finding new things to test in Duel Monsters. After all, he created Fusion, Synchro, XYZ, and Pendulum summoning.

Leo would eventually see his daughter break up with Yuichi, and quit the pro dueling circuit so she wouldn't have to duel him. Ray wasn't the only one, though. Several pro duelists quit after Z-ARC's quick rise to fame due to being afraid of getting hurt. However, the audience and by extension Z-ARC himself, seemed to take pleasure in watching his opponents suffer.

Z-ARC seemed to slowly go insane after being known as the #1 duelist in the world. He wanted so badly to duel anyone strong, to test his limits further, as he was never satisfied. Z-ARC constantly wanted more, just as the audience demanded more from him. This madness brought about a god complex within the young man, which caused Z-ARC to feel growing resentment toward humanity for being so weak.

One day, after waiting for weeks for an opponent to challenge him, Z-ARC declared "if no one will challenge me, then I will challenge all of you! I challenge the whole world!" This moment changed everything; as Z-ARC suddenly turned against the world, and started using his dueling as a means to exterminate humanity. Believing himself to be a

god, he believed it was his duty to eliminate the world of any weak-willed humans.
The world was destroyed by Z-ARC's constant thirst for blood, and humanity's population went down drastically. The remaining survivors went into hiding, doomed to live the rest of their lives in fear; and if they were lucky enough to live, they would be guaranteed to die alone.
Leo and his daughter Ray went into hiding together. "This can't be…" Ray said, crying that her ex was destroying the world. 'What happened to him…?' She wondered. Leo tried to reassure his daughter, but then she brought up something shocking. "I can feel the hatred in Yuichi's four dragons… The Odd Eyes Pendulum Dragon, the Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon, the Clear Wing Synchro Dragon, and the Starving Venom Fusion Dragon… Their souls are constantly thirsting for blood." Ray said, her voice shaking. Souls… Leo thought back to when he and his daughter were testing out the ARC System, and how they had discovered that the monsters had souls and free will. This is all my fault… By giving Duel Monsters physical beings and making the damage real, they have become a weapon used against humanity! He realized.
Leo started to break down. "Ray… This is all my fault. If I hadn't created the ARC System, and made

the monsters' damage real, humanity wouldn't be like this." He told her. "No, it's not your fault." Ray reassured him. It is my fault; and because it's my fault, I'm going to find a way to stop Z-ARC!

Since Leo was an inventor and scientist, he began brainstorming ways to defeat Z-ARC and restore humanity. As he was working, he saw a little bird outside his window. How interesting… Despite the destroyed climate, how are animals still thriving and adapting? Leo thought. This triggered something for him. If the tiniest bird could survive these awful times, then so could we… This inspired Leo to start thinking about nature, and how all other living beings managed to thrive under humans taking over their world. If they could do it, so can we!

With this thought process, Leo Akaba realized that the best way to take down Z-ARC would be at his own game: Duel Monsters. What better way to defeat Z-ARC than with Duel Monster cards that harnessed the forces of nature, something that has managed to prevail for several millennia, despite their world constantly being overtaken? Knowing that the ARC System made monsters real, it stood to reason that it could also make the forces of nature real from any type of card. From this, Leo was able to create four special nature related spell cards: En Flowers, En Birds, En Winds, and En Moon. Finally,

I can end humanity's suffering by beating Z-ARC with these cards! Leo thought with the first genuine excitement he'd felt in a long time.

Unfortunately, Leo's cards were stolen. At first he was crushed, as all of his hard work was gone. However, Leo realized quickly that no ordinary person had stolen his cards. It would have to have been someone who knew what he was working on. Ray! She stole the cards! Leo realized. He knew that Ray probably didn't like the idea of her father sacrificing himself, so he chased after her in a panic.

Leo found Ray about to duel her ex boyfriend. "Ray! Please don't do this! I was meant to duel Z-ARC, not you! You realize that playing those cards harnesses too much energy, and will ultimately kill you! You have your whole life ahead of you! Please don't do this!" Leo begged, but she ignored him.

Ray activated the four energy cards, which caused the sources of the cards (flowers, birds, wind, and moon) to fuse inside of her. This subsequently caused four glowing bracelets to appear on her arm for a brief period of time. This powerful natural energy that was being drawn from the sources of the real world was so intense that it caused Ray and Z-ARC permanent changes to their physical beings. The two former lovers died where they stood, and were reincarnated into four separate beings. The

energy also caused a permanent change to their world, as their world was suddenly split into four different dimensions. An explosion of energy occurs soon after, which knocks the Professor out.

95. Origins: Leo Akaba Part 2

Later, we see the Professor waking up in a city. He has lost a lot of his memories of what had happened to him, as well as losing memories of his daughter and of ever making the ARC System. Leo does somehow retain the memories of knowing what Duel Monsters is and how it works, as he sees kids playing it in a park. He touches the monster, and is surprised that it is a mere hologram. The kid laughs at him and says, “it’s just a hologram! Monsters aren’t real!” Leo is surprised about this, but he can’t seem to figure out why. He also notices that nobody appeared to be using any Fusion, Synchro, XYZ, or Pendulum monsters.

Due to having amnesia, Leo began to recreate the ARC System, despite it causing so much suffering in the original dimension. Around this time, he met and must’ve presumably married Henrietta, and they had a son named Reiji. He also created the Leo Institute and the Leo Duel School, where he purposefully taught all the summoning methods (except Pendulum) due to still having memories of it. He was bewildered that those summoning methods didn’t exist in this world.

A timeskip occurs, and Leo decides to scan his memories, as he is constantly getting strange flashbacks of events that feel familiar. When he looks at his memories, he finally puts the pieces together: Ray had made the ultimate sacrifice to save humanity by not only killing Z-ARC, but splitting the dimensions seemed to somehow revive people from the original dimension who were killed by Z-ARC. They seemed to have lost their memories as well. This sacrifice split Z-ARC and Ray into four separate beings, meaning that their spirits still lived on in separate people. Leo feared that if the pieces of Z-ARC ever reunited, their spirits would awaken and they'd fuse back into Z-ARC.

However, at the same time, Leo felt extremely guilty forgetting his daughter. He still missed her, and wished that she hadn't sacrificed herself to save everyone. This guilt ate away at Leo, and he started to obsess over it so much that he'd forget to work and pay off debts. This caused a strain in his relationship with Henrietta, and even with his young son, Reiji. As much as it hurt Leo to think, he couldn't help but prefer his daughter over Reiji, as he found himself wishing that his son was Ray instead.

Leo's obsessive thoughts about Ray seemed to motivate him to think that if he found all four pieces

of his daughter's reincarnations, he could see her again. So, Leo left his company and family behind without saying why, much to his family's shock and dismay.

Around this time, Leo offered his friend Yusho Sakaki to join him on his mission. At first, Yusho refused, as he had a life and family in the Standard Dimension. However, Leo explained to Yusho that his son Yuya Sakaki was one of the reincarnations of Z-ARC, and told him about the story behind Z-ARC. This caused Yusho to fear Yuya and disown him, seeing him as a "monster." This was what ultimately caused Yusho to leave everything behind, and put him on a path of lies and manipulation. (Although, he was already a jerk because he abused his wife)

However, Leo manipulated his friend into working for him. He sent Yusho to the XYZ Dimension to act as a spy and find the piece of Ray in that dimension. Yusho was hired at the Clover Branch school, and confirmed the existence of Ray's reincarnation, Ruri Obsidian, in that dimension.

This made Leo realize that there was a piece of Ray and Z-ARC in every dimension, one for each. Interestingly, all of Ray's pieces looked identical at first, but after getting to know them, you are able to tell them apart by some unexplainable magic. The

same went for the Z-ARC counterparts. Furthermore, as if bound by destiny or Ray and Z-ARC's will as former lovers, each Ray counterpart and Z-ARC counterpart per dimension would usually be romantically involved somehow.

Every counterpart was reincarnated as a baby. In the case of Yuzu and Yuya, their parents have no memory of ever adopting the two babies, which implies that the majority of the humans in every dimension are either revived dead people from the original dimension, (who lost their memories) or completely new beings. Each Ray counterpart inherited a bracelet from their originator, which was made from the natural energy magic played by the four cards. Also, the strange magic of the bracelets on each girl's wrist would be used to keep the Z-ARC counterparts from ever being in close contact, out of fear that it would awaken Z-ARC. However, Yuzu's bracelet inexplicably broke, possibly due to the fact that the magic sensed that Z-ARC would not be revived just because his counterparts were in a close proximity. This implies that to revive Z-ARC or Ray, it would need to be done by other means.

Leo decided to set up a base in the Fusion Dimension that would be his work of operation. Leo resolved that if he could get all the pieces of Ray together, their spirits would somehow fuse back into

his daughter. Desperate to have his daughter back, Leo set up Duel Academy and advertised it as a Fusion based dueling school; when in reality it was parents unknowingly giving up their kids to be a free military for him. Leo proceeded to gaslight and manipulate the students of Duel Academy, giving them morally questionable lessons about honor and brainwashing them with propaganda. Forcing the children to live at Duel Academy for their entire childhood and teenagehood meant that they would be more susceptible to following Leo's every command.

Leo targeted two children specifically: Serena Kyoya and Yuri Kiomi, who were the pieces of Ray and Z-ARC from the Fusion Dimension respectively. He isolated them both as children, making them feel as if the only one they could trust was him. Leo manipulated them both into being loyal to him, but the way he did was different. With Serena, he convinced her that her life was meaningless without him, and preyed on her insecurities about her self-worth to keep her close to him. With Yuri, he isolated him to the point of mental deterioration. Once Yuri's mind had been subjected to such a long time in isolation, he was let out and given more freedom than Serena. However, this affected Yuri's development in the long run, and

he ultimately developed a sadist mentality from it. This led to him being undyingly loyal to the Professor, which was perfect for when Leo; after all, not only had he “tamed and controlled” the piece of Z-ARC in the Fusion Dimension, but he was also to be used to find the other pieces of Ray.

Since Leo had one of the pieces of Ray in Duel Academy, he decided that it was time to collect the other pieces. He didn’t care whether or not the other pieces had lives or their own identity; in Leo’s mind, their wills and individuality meant nothing, and were only pawns in his plan to get his daughter back. As such, whenever he thought about any of the dimensional counterparts, (Ray or Z-ARC) he would refer to them as “pieces” instead of addressing them as valid human beings with true emotions and identities.

Leo came up with the ultimate plan: get the pieces of Ray back and fuse them together so that he could have his daughter. This was what would be known as Revival Zero. Leo didn’t care what extremes he had to go through, as his mind had deteriorated by this point. This caused him to start an interdimensional war with the XYZ Dimension by ordering his already manipulated students into becoming child soldiers into a war with innocents. Leo developed technology that would allow his

students to kill the XYZ civilians by turning them into cards, which converted their life energy into his biggest invention yet: The Arc-V Reactor. With this reactor, he used the life energy he gained from his students carding people to help in the process of restoring Ray's physical form.

And so, Leo continued to spread war propaganda to the students and commanders of Duel Academy, convincing them that this was all for the noble act of "making the dimensions into one" which would create "peace and harmony." In reality, all he wanted was his daughter back. While he was confident that recreating the original dimension would revive all those who had died, that was not his main objective.

The students, teachers, and Obelisk Force believed Leo's lies, as they weren't taught anything but his lies. They carried out his awful acts of violence on innocent citizens, with many being convinced that it was a hunting game. They were reassured that this was for a noble purpose, so they weren't really in the wrong. Thus, the raid of the XYZ Dimension continued, and caused an insanely high death count, several years worth of destroyed buildings, and permanent damage to the climate. Leo then sent Yuri to kidnap Ruri, and then Rin.

Leo then decided to send Yuri after Yuzu, and send Sora Perse to the Standard Dimension to act as a

double agent and spy. This led to Leo beginning his invasion of the Standard Dimension, and soon after, the Synchro Dimension. This was where Leo learned of the Lancers, a defense squad that he himself had made back at the Leo Institute, that was led by none other than his abandoned son, Reiji.

Despite all of the death, destruction, and harm Leo had caused, he did it all truly believing that it was the right thing to do. He did it all for the person he loved most: his daughter Ray. Leo truly lost his humanity after regaining his memories of his daughter and the original dimension. The terrible atrocities Leo Akaba committed is what ultimately started our central characters on their journey. This is the origin. This is the honest truth about Yugioh Arc-V.

96. The Heat of Battle

Back in the present, after Leo had finished explaining his story, Reiji and Yuya's jaws were on the floor. All these years I've been wondering what my father had been doing, or why he'd been doing it, and never in a million years would I have thought of this… Reiji thought. "I'm… A reincarnation of a monster?" Yuya asked in horror. Yusho stared down at him in disgust. 'Yes, you are. Do you understand now? That's part of the reason why I HAD TO LEAVE YOU.' Yusho's words cut deep into Yuya's already deep scars, which made him react aggressively. "There's no way of knowing that I would've turned into Z-ARC! If you had stuck around, maybe you'd see for yourself that I'm stronger than you ever realized… But it's too late now. I'm glad you left, because despite being on a long road of defending your every move… I was better off that way." Yuya confessed.
"I can sense Z-ARC's spirit lurking deep inside you, Standard Dimension piece." Leo said. 'Hey! My name's Yuya!' He protested. "That quick temperament of yours; it's exactly like Z-ARC's. All of your counterparts have that sense of blinding rage

that prevents them from seeing reason." Leo explained. Yuya widened his eyes in shock, thinking back to all the times that he had unreasonably defended his father without hearing the other person out. No… I'm such an idiot! Yuya thought in dismay.

"For example, your Fusion counterpart Yuri Kiomi inherited most of Z-ARC's personality. Not just his blinding rage, but his need for blood and pleasure in others' suffering." Leo pointed out. 'I bet that wasn't how Yuri always was! I bet your manipulation is what pushed him to be who he is today, and now the damage is irreversible!' Yuya yelled, becoming saddened at the thought. Yuri… Could he and I have been friends, if things had been different? He wondered. "How funny. You're the only person who defends Yuri and his terrible behavior; not even his parents did that. How convenient for a Z-ARC counterpart to support a fellow counterpart." Leo said. "Shut up! I'm not saying Yuri was right to do what he did, but you pushed him down that path!" Yuya shouted.

"Enough talking. You and Reiji got your answers, didn't you? Let's focus on dueling now." Yusho snapped. Reiji turned and looked at Yusho with intense anger. "You are NOT allowed to address me as 'Reiji.' Only those close to me can call me by my

real name. For you, my name is Declan!" He shouted at Yusho. Yusho ignored this, and turned back to Yuya.
Back with Team Eastfront, we see the bracelet girls dueling against the Tyler Sisters. "Oh, so you're like, the XYZ piece. We were actually there recently… I think we dueled your boyfriend… It was really funny seeing him get all upset when we mentioned you!" Grace said, pointing at Ruri. Ruri's eyes widened. Yuto… Dueled the Tyler Sisters? She wondered. 'Was it funny losing to him, then? Because from what I remember, he beat you!' Ruri retorted. "Ooooh we love a clap back!" Rin encouraged. Grace gritted her teeth in anger, as her attempts to trash talk and distract her opponent did not go as planned. "Whatever! Your trash talking sucks, just like you and your boyfriend!" Grace snapped. I just have to focus on the duel. I can't let her get to me. Ruri thought.
We see Sylvio beginning his duel with Dennis. "How about if you win, I'll give you Gong's card?" Dennis asks. Sylvio agreed to this. 'Y'know, you should really lighten up.' Dennis remarked. "Shut up!" Sylvio snapped.
We then see Yuto and Yugo dueling with Yuri. "Oh? You two are upset that I took your precious girls?" Yuri taunted. 'Of course we are! Do you realize how

creepy that was?' Yugo asked. Yuri responded with a smile, which triggered Yuto. "If you touched Ruri in any way, I'm killing you right now." He snapped. "Ohhh scary!" Yuri remarked. "Did you hurt her?" Yuto demands. "Oh, y'know… I just put her to sleep." He said. Yuto's eyes flash with anger, and he takes his turn. "Knight of honor and generosity! Abandon your code just this once to unleash your full strength and strike down your enemies! I XYZ Summon! Rank 3! The Phantom Knights of BREAK SWORD!" Yuto yells the last part. "My, my! You must really like knights." Yuri remarked. Yuto ignored him and activated its effect. "Yuto has the strength and personality of a knight! So you'd better watch out!" Yugo said. Yugo supported Yuto in his attempts to stop Yuri, both verbally and in general; as they both had a vendetta against the creep.

Back with Team Westfront, Shay and Kaito are dueling Zane. Zane has brought out his Chimeratech Overdragon, and has managed to double its strength. "Chimeratech Overdragon! Destroy everything in your path!" Zane declares. Kaito saves him and Shay from losing, and the battle phase ends. 'You Resistance duelists really are like cockroaches; annoying little pests that you can never get rid of.' Zane taunted. "I don't see that as a bad thing. In the Resistance, steeled strength and iron will are the

traits that are valued the most. Those two things are traits that only come from those who have had to adapt to every challenge thrown at us by you Fusion scum. However, unluckily for you and your Fusion Warriors, we have more willpower than you ever will!" Shay shouts, as he takes his turn.

Then we see Riley facing-off against Aster. He summons Destiny Hero Dystopia and tries to go in for the win, but Riley stops him. She makes a comeback and ultimately defeats him embarrassingly quickly. He slumps to the ground in shame, his pride bruised that he lost to a kid. "Just end me." He tells Riley, which shocks her. "No." She says, and just ties him up in a rope instead. I can't believe that after going on about how I'm just a kid, Aster would just tell me to kill him afterwards? What? What kind of messed up system of honor is that?

97. Way of the Enlightened

The episode begins with Sylvio vs Dennis. Dennis brings out his Ancient Gear Monsters, like he did in his duel with Shay during the Friendship Cup. This monstrosity! This is what Shay had to face… This monster that wreaked havoc on the XYZ Dimension… Sylvio thought. “Chaos Ancient Gear Giant!” Dennis chanted.
‘What will you do now?’ Dennis asked Sylvio. “I’m not sure! But I’ll take it down!” Sylvio declared.
Crow… I need your help. Sylvio looked down at his pocket, envisioning Crow’s card. Even if you are sealed into a card, I know you’re still with me! “I draw!” Sylvio yelled out, throwing his arm back with dramatic flair. ‘Yes!’ Sylvio exclaimed. “Huh?” Dennis asked. Sylvio turned to Dennis. “You’re going down!”
The duel lasts for most of the episode.
Later on, we see Sylvio has 200 life points and Dennis has 1,000. “What’s wrong? Giving up? I thought you were in this for your precious boyfriend!” Dennis taunted. Crow… Sylvio thought, picturing all the times they spent together. “Well, yeah. You’ve changed for the better in such a short

period of time. You've made friends, you make an effort to adapt to different situations, you wear an expensive pendant not to flaunt, but for sentimental value, and you've joined a rebellion to stop an interdimensional war to protect so many people… If anything, you're the kindest person I know!" Sylvio clutched his pendant. You believed in me when I didn't believe in myself… I admired you so much back then, but I never knew that you admired me too.

Sylvio held his head high. "I am in this for my boyfriend!" Sylvio declared, taking his turn.

Sylvio eventually wins the duel, sending Dennis flying backwards into a wall. However, the impact of the attack was so strong that Dennis broke through the wall and ended up in a separate room. Sylvio followed him. He stood over Dennis' body lying on the ground.

"Here… Take it." Dennis said, giving Sylvio Gong's card back. Sylvio snatched it back aggressively, and narrowed his eyes at his former comrade. 'You're a disgrace. I can't believe that you'd do that to your former comrades. You're the one who deserves to be carded, not them!' Sylvio shouted, taking Dennis' duel disk off and putting it on his arm. He sees the "card" feature on his opponent's duel disk. This is it… Sylvio thinks. Dennis doesn't protest; he just

lies on the ground weakly.
Sylvio makes the mistake of looking at Dennis in the eyes, and seeing him like that made him falter. He's so pathetic and broken down… Sylvio realized. Looking into Dennis' eyes, he could see grief in them; was it regret? Did Dennis regret betraying his comrades, and coming to this point? Sylvio flashbacked to his duel with Yuto, and how he wanted revenge against the soldier for what he had done to his father. I couldn't do it. Yuto just looked so helpless and as though he had been through enough pain already… I'm glad I spared him. Sylvio could never forget the look in Yuto's eyes, how tragic it was to see the grief of a hardened soldier. My whole journey began with him… Sylvio thought, thinking about his first duel with Yuto. Yuto was right, too. I did need to change. I'm glad he put me through all that. His kindness toward someone like me changed me for the better, and I'm glad that I became a Lancer! I have been enlightened!
But now… Looking at Dennis like this, in such a sad form… It reminds me of Yuto. I can't do it… I want to so badly, but I can't. I don't understand why… He deserves it! With Yuto, at least I could get why he had to be spared; because we were meant to be on the same team. But Dennis? He deserves this! So why can't I just press the freakin' button! Sylvio

hesitated, unable to card Dennis. As poetic as it would be for someone like him to turn into a card, I just can't… I can't subject him to the same thing that he subjected others to. Sylvio thought, taking Dennis' duel disk off and dropping it to the ground.
"So you won't kill me?" Dennis asked in a whisper, still lying pathetically on the floor. Sylvio shook his head, crying. "You deserve it! You deserve so much pain that I can't even describe it! But… I can't become who you've become!" Sylvio cried out. I'm sorry Crow, I can't give you the satisfaction of seeing your enemy be killed by my hands…
Dennis closed his eyes. "Well, if you won't do it…" He began, taking his duel disk in his hand, and aimed it at himself. 'Then I will!' Dennis declared, and a bright purple light flashed around Dennis. "Wait!" Sylvio yelled, but it was too late. Dennis' body disappeared, and the only thing left of him was a card.
Sylvio picked up the card, and put it in his pocket. He then smashed Dennis' duel disk so that it could no longer be used to card people anymore. Still in shock at Dennis' suicide, Sylvio slumped to the ground where his body used to lay. Did he… Did Dennis do that because he regretted leaving us behind? Did he have that much pain in his heart that he would rather die by his own hands than be

spared? Sylvio didn’t expect to be crying over the death of his enemy, but there he was, crying over Dennis. Sylvio felt guilty for it, as he knew Dennis had killed so many, but he couldn’t help it.

I just want this war to end! I can’t stand anyone else I know getting carded! He thought about his father, Crow, Gong, and now Dennis was in a card. The flashbacks haunted Sylvio, so he closed his eyes. It’s such a disturbing sight! I just want them all back! Crouching on the ground, Sylvio let out a scream of pain and despair; something that could only be produced after witnessing so much death and destruction. How does everyone handle this? He thought, thinking especially about Yuto. Because I can’t!

98. The Mercenary and the Bounty Hunter

Back with Team Westfront, Shay and Kaito were still locked in combat with chief Zane Truesdale. “You will pay for what you’ve done to my family!” Kaito yelled. “I will, huh? You’re on, merc!” Zane challenged.

Shay activates another of his many rank up spell cards, and summons Satellite Cannon Falcon. He uses its effect to reduce the attack of Zane’s Chimeratech Overdragon to 1600. “Good work, Shay!” Kaito encourages.

Later on in the duel, this exchange happens: “I know you; you’re a bounty hunter for the Fusion Dimension who kills for money in the interdimensional war. But why would you kill my family? They were innocents!” Kaito asks. ‘I don’t just kill for money; I kill for the thrill of it all! Surely you of all people must understand that we’re a lot alike.’ Zane explains. “I’m nothing like you!” Kaito yells. “No, you’re wrong. We are very similar. You would know what it’s like to kill for sport; after all, your murderous little rampages have garnered quite a lot of attention around here. You’ve become

known as the feared mercenary of the XYZ. People have analyzed your deck over and over to try and take you down, but no one has succeeded. Duel Academy has offered me quite a bit of money if I take you down." Zane told him. "It's not like I enjoyed killing! I only did it because I wanted revenge!" Kaito said. "How petty that your reason is simply revenge. Where's that gonna get you after you fulfill it? Nowhere, that's what! But as for me, money gets you everything in this world!" Zane went on.
"Don't listen to this maniac, Kaito!" Shay told him. The duel resumed.
Further on, we get this. "Stop acting as though you're so innocent. Because you know what? The truth is, you have just as much blood on your hands as I do!" Zane accused him. 'At least I had a good reason to kill!' Kaito retorted. "A kill is still a kill, no matter how noble you think your reason is. In war, we're all guilty of something. Nobody is truly innocent, so just accept it!" Zane responded. "So you think that anyone deserves to die if no one is truly innocent?" Kaito asked. "Of course. Everyone has blood on their hands." Zane replied. "My family never hurt anyone!" Kaito yelled. "That doesn't mean that they were innocents. After all, they tried to fight back, so they were basically submitting to a

life where they are forced to kill to survive." Zane explained. "Shut up! My father was a caring man who would never hurt anyone! And my brother was too young to do anything!" Kaito responded.
"You XYZ citizens think you're so high and mighty, huh? Well, it makes me sick! You think that you can just get away with the murder of my comrades and think that you're justified because we hurt you?" Zane pointed out. 'You were the ones who started this mess in the first place! We only fight because we have too!' Kaito replied. "You're one to talk! Just how many of my comrades have you killed?" Zane retorted. Kaito didn't respond. "That's what I thought! So stop acting like you deserve something when you and I are both guilty!"
In the end, Kaito and Shay won the duel by the skin of their teeth. The Bounty Hunter lied on the ground in an uncomfortable position, gritting his teeth. Kaito and Shay walked up to him, and took off his duel disk. "This is for what you've done to so many!" Kaito said, preparing to card Zane.
However, in a shocking twist of fate, Zane pulled a knife out of his pocket and stabbed himself in the chest. This move shocked Kaito and Shay so much that they dropped the duel disk on the ground. Zane's body heaved as it struggled to move, and a large puddle of blood spilled on the ground. Shay

and Kaito backed away from the blood puddle that was drawing at their feet. “You will… Never get justice…” Zane rasped, before dying.
Outraged, Kaito ran toward Zane’s body and stole the knife from his hands, and stabbed him in the back. But it was too late for that to mean anything, as the Bounty Hunter of the Fusion Dimension had already died. He had gone out on his own terms, unwilling to be killed by those who he deemed as scum. It was also the ultimate screw you to Kaito, as Zane’s suicide meant that the Mercenary of the XYZ could not get the satisfaction of avenging his family as Zane had killed himself.
“Kaito!” Shay called out, running up to him. Kaito left the knife in Zane’s back, and crouched in the puddle of blood. ‘That $%#@! He killed himself to prevent me from getting my revenge!’ Kaito said bitterly. Shay put a hand on his friend’s shoulder. “But you did get revenge. We got revenge by defeating the Bounty Hunter in a duel, leaving him with no other option but to kill himself.” Shay pointed out. “I guess you’re right.” Kaito muttered. “C’mon. We can grieve our losses together after we’ve taken down Duel Academy.” Shay said, reaching a hand out to Kaito. Kaito took his hand, but it was covered in his enemy’s blood. Despite this, Shay still took Kaito’s hand, which spread the

blood onto Shay’s hand. Kaito realized this. We do have blood on our hands after all…

99. Waiting in the Wings

Back with Team Northfront, Reiji and Yuya are still dueling their respective fathers. “So that’s why Yuzu’s bracelet was always so weird!” Yuya realized. Yusho nodded. ‘I used to be a friend of her father. Syuzo would claim that he could never remember how he got her, and when I thought about it further, I couldn’t remember ever getting you.’ Yusho explained. “And that’s because we were reincarnates?” Yuya asked. Yusho confirmed this. “This feels like some messed up Sci-Fi film!” Yuya exclaimed. “Leo and I wouldn’t have had to do this if it weren’t for the events of the original dimension.”

At the same time, Team Westfront is coming back together. Riley is shocked to see Zane in a puddle of blood, and starts trembling. Shay tries to comfort her, but his hands have blood on them, which scares her. “Come on. Let’s go find the others.” Kaito tells them.

We see Sylvio running through the halls of Duel Academy, presumably running back to go help the Bracelet girls.

Speaking of which, the Bracelet girls are still

dueling the Tyler Sisters. It's Serena's turn, and she brings out Lunalight Sabre Dancer. "Butterfly with violet poison, Rabbit with quick reflexes, and Marten with delicate grace! Fuse together to form the powerful beast of the night, whose presence is just like the moon itself! I Fusion Summon! Level 9! Lunalight Sabre Dancer!"

'Due to Sabre Dancer's effect, it gains 200 attack for every Lunalight monster in my graveyard! So it has 4,000 attack!' Serena explains. "And because Marten was sent to the graveyard by card effect, I can use her ability to send a Lunalight spell or trap to my hand!" She says.

"Go, Sabre Dancer!" Serena declares. 'I can't believe we're fighting the R piece from our own dimension! You're such a traitor!' Gloria commented. "I'd rather be a traitor than a monster!" She retorts. "Yeah, yeah, whatever." Grace says, activating a trap. "Actually, like, your trap won't work. Sabre dancer like, can't be targeted for effects. Lay off the attempts, honey." Serena explained, mocking their valley girl voices. Yuzu smiled at this. "What?" Grace asked in shock. "Good job, Serena!" Ruri encouraged. "How does it feel now to be beaten at your own game?" Rin taunted them. "Little brats. You'll pay for this!" Gloria retorted. Grace and Gloria's life points are reduced to 2,000.

On Yuzu's turn, she brings out Bloom Diva the Melodious Choir. "I activate the spell card, Polymerization! I fuse Sonata the Melodious Diva and Mozarta the Melodious Maestra! Angel's song, supreme genius! With the guidance of the baton, gather your power! I fusion summon! Come to the stage, Bloom Diva the Melodious Choir!" She chants. Yuzu attacks with Bloom Diva. "Bloom Diva's effect activates! When she attacks a monster, she isn't destroyed! And you take all the damage!" She explains.
It's Gloria's turn, and she draws. "I activate the field spell, Amazoness Village! This raises the attack of all Amazoness monsters by 200, and whenever they're destroyed, I can summon another in their place!" She declares. 'Ugh, that's annoying.' Serena mutters. "Shut up, traitor!" Grace yells. "Hush, dear. No one's got the time for your whining." Serena said in a mocking tone.
On Grace's turn, she brings out Amazoness Empress in defense mode. This guarantees that no Amazoness monsters will be destroyed.
Rin's turn comes around, and she is able to bring out two Windwitch Ice Bells, which inflicts 1,000 points of damage to the Tyler Sisters, leaving them at 1,000. She is able to special summon Windwitch Snow Bell from her hand due to its effect. "When

the witches of snow and ice combine, you'll feel a chill that's even greater than the one coming down your spine! I Synchro Summon! Windwitch Winter Bell!" Rin chants. "With Winter Bell's effect, I can have it copy one of the effects of a Windwitch monster in my graveyard. So I chose Windwitch Ice Bell!" This deals the Tyler Sisters 500 more points of damage. In response, Gloria activates Quiet Life and Amazoness Hall. With this, Grace and Gloria can gain life points equal to the attack of any of their opponent's special summoned monsters so long as they have an Amazoness on their field. (Which they do, since Empress can't be destroyed by battle) They choose to gain attack equal to Windwitch Winter Bell's attack. They are at 2900 life points.

Ruri's turn begins, and she manages to swarm the field with Lyrilusc Turquoise Warbler, two Sapphire Swallows, and one Cobalt Sparrow. Through her Lyrilusc effects, she is able to quickly special summon monsters. This allows the Tyler Sisters to gain life points, but only 200, as Lyrilusc monsters have low attack counts. They are currently at 3100 life points. "I overlay my Turquoise Warbler, Sapphire Swallows, and Cobalt Sparrow! Wings of beauty and courage, soar through the sky and reign over your enemies with grace! I XYZ Summon! Rank 1! Lyrilusc Assembled Nightingale!" Since the

Tyler Sisters have already used up their effect, they cannot gain more life points for this turn.
‘Assembled Nightingale has four overlay units; meaning that its attack raises from 0 to 800. And it can attack directly for each overlay unit!’ Ruri declares. “What?” Gloria gasps. “You go, girl!” Yuzu encouraged. If Assembled Nightingale has 800 attack and has four overlay units, then this will be it! Serena thinks. “Now, Assembled Nightingale! Channel the pain of my people and attack the Tyler Sisters directly!” Ruri declared. The direct attacks from Assembled Nightingale were surprisingly ruthless for such an angelic looking monster.
“This first attack is for the innocents that you’ve killed!” Ruri yelled. She thought back to the horrible feelings she got when she saw innocent civilians of all ages she witnessed die in the Resistance shelter. I still remember how it felt to hold a dying patient and feel their fear in my arms… ‘This second attack is for the Spade Branch that you mercilessly slaughtered!’ Ruri said. She thought back to her old school, its motto, and the duels she took part in. Why couldn’t things have stayed that way? “This third attack is for my friends who you tried to destroy!” Ruri said. She pictured her beloved brother Shay and boyfriend Yuto, and all the fun times they spent together. I love them both so much! “And this

last attack is for being a part of Duel Academy and continuing to hurt others and take pleasure in people's pain!" Ruri thought back to the invasion; how she did her best not to hurt anyone, but still ended up having to kill someone to survive. Ruri closed her eyes. I don't want them to die, but… What if I have to kill them…? How did Shay and Yuto deal with this dilemma?

Assembled Nightingale's attack sent the Tyler Sisters flying through a wall, which made a giant hole. Their life points were reduced to 0, meaning that the Bracelet girls had officially won. Yuzu, Serena, and Rin wanted to congratulate Ruri, but they were left speechless after her unusually vicious attack. This is… The pain of an XYZ Duelist… Rin realized. I never expected someone so gentle and innocent could hold so much hurt deep inside. How does she deal with it all? Serena wondered. Poor Ruri… I hope we manage to take down Duel Academy. For her and all of the XYZ Dimension's sakes. Yuzu thought.

Ruri approached the two sisters slowly, and the Bracelet girls watched in anticipation from behind. The Tyler Sisters were crouching on the ground in shame. "I can't believe we lost to an XYZ scum." Gloria said bitterly. 'For realsies. I feel like a total disgrace!' Grace exclaimed. The two sisters looked

up to see Ruri staring at them. “Just kill us already.” Gloria said casually. “What?” Ruri gasped in shock. “It’s the way of our people. If we lose to XYZ scum, then we’re lower than dirt. We don’t deserve to live.” Grace explained. “No! I can’t kill you!” Ruri said to them. “Why not? You said yourself how much we hurt you and your friends.” Gloria pointed out. “I know, but… I just can’t. I’m trying to end the war… Not keep the cycle going.” Ruri told them. She walked away from them.

Ruri approached the other Bracelet girls. “Hey, I know what we can do with them.” Rin piped up. ‘What?’ She asked. “We can make them our hostages until we put them in the Facility.” Rin suggested. “What’s that?” Ruri asked. “Basically jail.” Yuzu explained. “Yeah… I guess I’d rather that than kill them.” Ruri agreed.

Shortly after, the girls explained to the Tyler Sisters what their punishment would be, which they readily accepted. “You’re gonna stay with us until then. And if you try to escape or turn on us, then we’ll stop you!” Serena told them. ‘That’s fine. What would be the point in trying to escape?’ Gloria said. After this, the Bracelet girls decided to find and assist Team Northfront. “But where’s the Professor?” Rin asked. “I know where the Professor is.” Serena declared.

100. Cutting Ties

The episode begins with the Bracelet girls and Tyler Sisters reuniting with Sylvio. “Oh, did you find Dennis?” Yuzu asked. He nodded, and showed them Gong and Dennis’ cards. They gasped. “Dennis carded himself…” Sylvio explained. The girls were stunned; despite what Dennis had done, they hadn’t expected someone as cheery as him to commit suicide. “I don’t know how to feel about this.” Serena admitted. Yuzu took her hand.

We see Alexis and her Duel School plus the Resistance fighting back against the Obelisk Force outside. Unfortunately, she is horrified to witness the entire Resistance get carded one by one. “No!” Alexis yells out in horror.

At the same time, Yuri is seen taking his turn. “Prepare yourself!” He yelled, drawing dramatically. Yugo gritted his teeth.

Meanwhile, with Team Northfront, Yuya’s duel with Yusho continues. “Even if I am a monster, even if that was a good enough reason to leave, I can’t ever forgive you for what you’ve done!” Yuya yelled at his father. “I never expected you to. I didn’t think that you’d be this stupid. It took you long enough.”

Yusho coldly responded. The duel continued.
Then, we see this exchange: “Thanks to my friends, I’ve learned that your teachings and philosophy was a lie! Your so-called ‘dueling to spread smiles’ might have seemed nice on the outside, but your beliefs pressured young duelists into ignoring their own needs and emotions for the benefit of others. That isn’t true happiness or positivity! It’s fake, shallow! And just toxic! Plus, encouraging people to preach your beliefs is just insensitive, not only to those who were taught differently, but to those who have been hurt through dueling. Do you know how much I embarrassed myself early on trying to preach your toxic beliefs onto those who suffered?” Yuya said, calling out his father. ‘You’re an embarrassment. Just looking at you right now, I’m reminded even more of why I left you behind.’ Yusho commented. “Shut up!” Yuya retorted, continuing the duel.
Later, we see that Yusho made a risky move that destroyed everything on both sides of the field. This puts both him and Yuya in a risky position. “I end my turn!” Yusho says. If I can draw a Pendulum monster with a scale of at least 7, I can win this! Yuya thinks. He currently has Stargazer Magician, Odd-Eyes Pendulum Dragon, and Performapal Silver Claw in his hand.

Yuya gritted his teeth and took his turn. His eyes widened. Timegazer Magician! I got it! “Swing far, Pendulum! Carve the arc of victory! My monsters are ready to swing into actionnnn! Turn up the heat, Odd-Eyes Pendulum Dragon! Slash your way to victory, Performapal Silver Claw!” Yuya then declared his battle phase.

‘Dad, I’m not just talking about all you’ve done to me! I’m speaking for the many people that you’ve hurt!’ Yuya exclaimed, attacking with Silver Claw first. “This attack is for the people of the XYZ Dimension, who you cruelly lied to and left when they needed you most!” Yuya shouted. The attack of Silver Claw sent Yusho flying into a pillar. “Odd-Eyes, attack! Spiral Flame Strike!” Yuya declared. “And this final attack is for the people of the Standard Dimension! My mother, who you abused so much that she was afraid to tell me the truth about you for years! Syuzo, who was one of your friends, but was also one of the first to be betrayed! Yuzu and Gong, who felt burdened to carry the weight of my emotions after you left! And for your many admirers across all dimensions, I pity them, as they live their lives in false hope!” Yuya yelled out, as Odd-Eyes’ attack hit his father and the pillar behind him. Yusho’s life points fell to 0, and the pillar above him began to crumble.

“Dad! Move!” Yuya yelled, running toward him to try and save him. However, Yusho simply looked up with a disturbingly calm expression on his face, as if he was accepting to be crushed. Reiji ran and grabbed Yuya to hold him back, right as the pillar collapsed on top of Yusho. “Nooooo!” Yuya shouted. Once the dust had cleared, Yuya tried to dig his father out. He found his father dead under the rubble, his face the same disturbingly calm expression as before. Yuya began to cry, as despite hating his father, he still didn’t want to see his opponent die. I can’t do this anymore! Yuya thought in despair.

The episode ends with Team Westfront and Team Eastfront entering the throne room at the same time. They are shocked to see Reiji and Leo already in a duel, and even more shocked to see Yuya crying next to a dead Yusho Sakaki. Yusho…? He was a part of Duel Academy? Oh no… Yuya’s reliving his pain all over again! Yuzu realized.

101. The Power of Hope

The episode begins with Yuzu and Sylvio walking over to Yuya. “What happened?” Yuzu asked. ‘My father was even worse than I imagined… “Yuya said with tears in his eyes.” He was part of Duel Academy?’ Sylvio asked. “Yeah… But he also contributed to the invasion of the XYZ Dimension and was just straight-up rude.” Yuya explained. Yuzu put a hand on his shoulder. “But despite that… I don’t know why I’m so upset about him being dead!” Yuya exclaimed. “No, I get it. Dennis killed himself after our duel, and I still feel this strange sense of grief about it… And about your father… My father wasn’t a good man either, but I used to overlook all his flaws… So I understand what it’s like.” Sylvio reassured him. “I know it’s conflicting, but I’m so happy that you’re no longer burdened by your father.” Yuzu said, smiling at him. Yuya nodded, wiping the tears from his eyes. “Yeah. I can finally let go of the past.” Yuya said, and he took off his Pendulum necklace and laid it next to his father’s body. He, Sylvio, and Yuzu then walked back to their fellow Lancers.

Meanwhile, Reiji and Leo are still engaged in a duel.

“Reiji…” Leo began. His son’s eyes flashed with anger. ‘Declan!’ He said angrily. “Fine… Declan. Surely you understand that your little rebellion here is pointless. I know you’re smart enough to figure out that what I’m doing is for the good of everyone. Your thought process is absolutely illogical.” Leo said. “Lies! You’re only doing this to get your daughter back! You don’t care about anyone else! You’re willing to abandon your family, murder millions, destroy cities, ruin climates, and break apart loved ones just to get one person back? You’re the one who’s illogical!” Reiji retorted. “When the four pieces come together, then the four dimensions will go back to the original dimension. Everyone who has been carded will be revived in the original dimension.” Leo said calmly. “What about those who were just straight-up murdered? Will they be revived?” Reiji asked. “I highly doubt it.” Leo answered, taking his turn.

The duel went on, and Reiji brought out his three D/D/D “king” cards. Interestingly, Leo also can Fusion, Synchro, and XYZ Summon monsters.

‘Even ignoring my previous point, just because you’ll be reviving people doesn’t mean the damage is just undone! People will still have permanent scars after what you’ve put them through, even if they are physically healed!’ Reiji yelled, his voice

shaking a little. “I see you are not-so-subtly speaking from personal experience.” Leo remarked. “Of course I am! Do you seriously think that people will just forgive you after all you’ve done?” Reiji asked. “I don’t care about what other people think of me. I only care about my objective.” Leo responded. “Clearly.” Reiji muttered. “Exactly.” Leo replied.

“What about Ray? You care about what she thinks, right? I highly doubt that she’d want to be brought back into a world where her father is a genocidal maniac who abandoned his family to be with her!” Reiji pointed out. ‘Silence! You don’t know anything about Ray!’ Leo snapped. His calm composure finally broke when I brought up Ray… Reiji thought. “That may be so, but it stands to reason that most humans will naturally feel survivor’s guilt if so many were sacrificed just to bring them back… And just think about that, Leo! You’ve killed millions just for one person. One person who was okay with sacrificing herself for the greater good, and probably expected you to move on with your life. Bringing Ray back would undo all the progress that she worked so hard to achieve!” Reiji pointed out.

“Liar! Z-ARC wouldn’t be in this world, so it wouldn’t undo anything!” Leo retorted. ‘But Ray sacrificed herself to revive everyone and create unity

and peace, right? You're basically disrupting that peace by bringing her back!' Reiji replied. Leo's expression was an expression of pure rage for his son. "You don't know what you're saying." He said to Reiji. "Oh believe me, I do." Reiji replied. "You're absolutely selfish and disgusting. You really think this is the right thing to do? I don't think that anyone would say that causing an INTERDIMENSIONAL WAR AND/OR kidnapping four innocent TEENAGE GIRLS would put you on the right side of history…." Reiji remarked.
"You don't know anything." Leo spat. "Please. You just told me your whole sob story to justify your horrible actions. That excuse isn't valid anymore… And you know what? My opinions haven't wavered in the slightest. If anything, they've gotten stronger because you've given me more points." Reiji said.
'You're so narrow-minded it's laughable.' Leo spat back. "I'm narrow-minded? Do you hear yourself right now? You're the one who's sacrificing so much and going to extremes just to bring one person back. And you say I'm narrow-minded? Yeah, great excuse Leo." Reiji mocked.
"The world was better in the original dimension. People were truly happy before Z-ARC showed up. No one here is truly happy… So it's not like my actions have changed much anyway." Leo

dismissed. ‘What are you talking about? The four dimensions have thrived on their own! And your actions have torn people apart, so of course they’ve faced suffering and grief! The people I’ve met from across all the dimensions are some of the most optimistic, lively bunch I know!’ Reiji retorted, thinking about the Lancers. “Despite all that you’ve put my Lancers through, all the death, war, and trauma… They still manage to prevail, and find joy in life! And you dare to say that people in the four dimensions aren’t happy? The people who have suffered the most hardships but manage to find the will to continue onwards are the most admirable people I know! And that’s true optimism!” Reiji snapped.

“Hope is an illusion made by your brain to make you feel better in dire circumstances.” Leo dismissed.

“No, Leo. Hope is what has driven these people to do great things. Look around you! You can’t deny their progress. All the Lancers may have come from difficult backgrounds, but their hope has united them and gotten them this far. My Lancers’ hope, steeled strength, iron will, and true honor will be Duel Academy’s downfall!” Reiji declared.

Yuya, Yuzu, Sylvio, Serena, Ruri, Rin, Shay, Kaito, and Riley listened to Reiji in awe. They felt proud after Reiji had acknowledged them, and some of

them even recognized the subtle shout-outs to certain people. Shay smiled when Reiji mentioned “steeled strength and iron will.” He really does understand the power of the Resistance. Shay thought. True honor… Reiji’s right! The Lancers have more honor than Duel Academy ever will. Serena thought. Get em’ Reiji! You tell him! Sylvio thought. I don’t even know how Leo can argue against big brother… He’s just repeating the same garbage over and over again. Riley thought.

Reiji took his turn, and summoned out his three Doom King Armageddons. “Your arguments are invalid! You should just give up before I have to kill you!” Leo retorted. ‘This is coming from the man who is claiming that sacrificing millions and their dimensions is worth bringing one person back… And you say my arguments are invalid? Arguing with intelligent people sure is difficult; but arguing with stupid people is impossible.’ Reiji clapped back. “Oooohhh!” Serena said loud enough for the Professor to hear her. The Bracelet girls all clapped at Reiji roasting his father. Leo was so stunned by his son’s roast that he couldn’t find the words to respond.

Reiji attacked Leo with his three Doom King Armageddons, which won him the duel. Leo was sent flying back into his throne in a position that

could not have been comfortable on his back. “Let’s goooo Reiji!” Sylvio cheered. Everyone clapped and cheered for Reiji’s win. He turned to his Lancers and smiled.
‘You win… I guess you have to kill me now.’ Leo said. “Why?” Reiji questioned. “It’s the way of Duel Academy. If we lose to scum, then we deserve death as punishment.” Leo replied. Reiji shook his head. “You deserve something far worse than death; the Facility.” Reiji told him. “Ooooh yeah!” Rin cheered. “I humbly accept my defeat… But I cannot guarantee that everyone else will, so don’t think you’ve won yet.” Leo warned them. “If we’ve made it this far and taken you down, then everyone else won’t be a problem.” Reiji responded.
Riley passed her older brother a rope to tie their father up with.
“We need to go find Yuto and Yugo. They stopped Yuri so that Yuya and I could get here.” Reiji declared. Everyone nodded in agreement. “You’re coming with us.” Reiji said to Leo and the Tyler Sisters. They all started to leave the room. The episode ends with the camera zooming in on Yusho’s half-buried body and Yuya’s Pendulum necklace next to it.

102. Origins: Yuri Kiomi Part 1

The episode begins with a 6 year old Yuri about to board the ship to Duel Academy. “Mom? Dad…? Why are you sending me to Duel Academy…? I’m scared.” He said, hugging their legs. ‘Hush! We’re sending you away so we can have a break!’ The father scolded. “A break…? From me?” Yuri asked. “Of course from you! Who else would we be talking about?” The mom yelled at him. Yuri began to cry. “Oh, the ship’s here. Get on.” The dad said coldly, pushing his son toward the line. “I don’t wanna leave you! I miss you!” Yuri cried.

The scene changes to a scared Yuri looking around for his dorm. A teacher finds him and points him in the direction of his room. “Oh… Thanks.” Yuri says shyly.

In a class, we see Yuri in the same room as Serena. A teacher is teaching them the rules of Duel Academy. “The main principle of Duel Academy is honor. We always must treat our opponents with utmost respect, and do the right thing even when it’s difficult. However, the most important principle of all is that the Professor’s word is law. Anything he tells us to do we do, without question. Even if it

goes against our principle.” The teacher explains.
Yuri and a blonde boy are chosen to duel each other. Yuri loses, and the teacher shames him for it. “You are lower than scum! Only victors deserve respect!”
Yuri is seen trying to talk to people, but they bully him for losing. “Loser!” They taunt him. But… I just want to have friends! Why are they so mean?
Later, Yuri is seen watching a young Serena duel. Wow! She seems so strong! I wish I was that good! He thinks.
Yuri is then seen with the Professor. “You must be Yuri Kiomi, correct?” He asks. Yuri nods. ‘Well, I’ll just make things clear; you are not worth anything to us.’ Leo cruelly says. “What?” Yuri asks. “Don’t believe me? Your parents hated you. They gave you up just to be away from you. Nobody here likes you. You have no one.” The Professor says to him. Yuri starts to cry. “The only person you have is me. So you’d better listen to my every word. Understand?” Leo barked at him. Yuri quickly nodded in fear. “Yes! I understand, mister!” He responded quickly.
Later, we see Yuri admiring Serena from afar, and he tries to go up to talk to her. I want her to be my friend! He thinks. However, he is prevented by Serena’s teacher. “The Professor needs you for a mind scan.” The teacher tells him. Yuri sighs and agrees. For whatever reason, every time he tries to

talk to Serena he is always interrupted, and never gets the chance to.
A timeskip occurs, and Yuri is 8. He is seen going to the Professor's throne room. "C'mon. We need to do something important." Leo orders. Yuri nods obediently and follows behind.
Yuri is put in an empty white room, where he is locked in by the Professor. "P… Professor? What am I doing here? I'm scared!" Yuri cries, banging on the door. He suddenly hears the Professor's voice radiating around the room. 'You will stay here for the next few days. I need you for an experiment.' Leo responded. "What experiment? What about my dueling?" Yuri asked. "You will be given lessons here, and your meals will be brought to you through the door." Leo explained. Yuri noticed that there was a mattress and a toilet in the corner of the room. It's so cramped! I can barely walk ten steps! He thought.
The next few days pass, and by the end of it, Yuri's eyes are dull and tired. "I haven't collected all the data I need. I expect you to be in this room every other week for the next few years until I complete my research." The Professor ordered. Yuri nodded sadly, and walked out. He had a hard time balancing, and his eyes felt strange after looking at things that were actually in color.
One day, the Professor calls Yuri and Serena in to

talk. Yuri sees Serena enter, and gets excited. I want to talk to her so badly! He thinks. I should've given her a gift or something… Yuri fretted.
"I have decided to look after you two more closely." Leo informed them. 'That's not fair! You already look after me enough!' Serena protested. Yuri nodded slowly. "Serena, you know that I have to keep you safe." Leo reasoned. "Why? I can protect myself!" She protested. "That's confidential information." He said. Yuri understood Serena's anger, and he wished that he could comfort her. "You two will be kept under even stricter surveillance from now on." The Professor said.
We see Yuri in the white room again, and he looks miserable. His eyes look like he's been crying, and he desperately wants to leave. The only joy in life Yuri finds is dueling, which he only gets to do in the white room once a day. With dueling, he's able to take out his frustrations and sadness.

103. Origins: Yuri Kiomi Part 2

A timeskip happens, and Yuri is 11. He is still in the room for days on end. Yuri is more prone to anger and violence when something bad happens, or when he feels ignored. For example, whenever he tries to make friends with his fellow students, they reject him constantly. They see Yuri as the Professor's "lab rat," and think that he's worthless because of it. Whenever they make him mad, Yuri lashes out at them violently. He is almost always reported to the Professor, who just makes him go back to the white room to sit alone in.

The Professor decides to send Yuri on a patrol with the Obelisk Force to test his skills. Together, they find two Duel Academy escapees and challenge them to a duel. In this duel, Yuri unleashes his anger and violent tendencies onto the poor students. He finds himself feeling a slight satisfaction at their pain. When he wins, the Obelisk Force congratulates him. "Watch this. Stand back." They tell the boy. Yuri gets behind, and watches in awe as the Obelisk Force cards the two escapees. "This is what carding is. You use this whenever you beat an opponent, or whenever the Professor tells you to." The Obelisk

Force member says.
“Here, you can have one; now that you’re a part of the squad.” Another member says, handing one to Yuri. Yuri is amazed by this technology. For the first time in his life, he feels a sense of control and freedom in being able to fight back. Yuri smiles at the new duel disk he acquired.
We see a scene of a kid bullying Yuri, but then he challenges the bully to a duel. He beats the bully with his Starving Venom Fusion Dragon, and viciously continues to attack even when the duel is over. The bully is left with scars and bruises all over their limbs. Yuri feels a rush from this; in fact, it’s the first few times he’s ever felt so alive and excited before. He then seals the boy in a card, which shocks the surrounding students. Yuri smiles as the card falls to the ground. He turns to leave, and the other students move out of the way in fear.
Afterwards, a montage of Yuri dueling fellow students and sealing them into cards is shown. With each duel, he gets more and more unhinged. Yuri starts to genuinely enjoy seeing his opponents in pain, and feels no empathy for them after the duel. Notably though, the Professor seems to not need him for experiments as much.
A timeskip occurs, and Yuri is 14. He is in the XYZ Dimension attacking innocent civilians, and carding

them as they run in fear. After carding them, he throws them in the air, where the cards are soon caught in a fire on a nearby building and disintegrate.
Later, we see Yuri interacting with Dennis. “Oh, so you’re from around here?” Yuri asks, with a smile on his face. ‘Yeah, but I worked as a double agent.’ Dennis replied. They continued talking, and it should be noted that this is technically Yuri’s first “friend.” Heck, this is the first person that Yuri gets to know and actually likes.
We see Yuri being given the mission to kidnap the Bracelet girls, starting with Ruri Obsidian of the XYZ Dimension. He is given sleeping gas to knock her out in case she fights back.
Before kidnapping Ruri, we see Yuri hanging out with Dennis again. “Oh honey, lay off the robe. I want to see you more.” Dennis teased. Yuri smiled, pulling the hood off. ‘Of course, of course. Only for you, dear.’ He said back. “You gonna go card more people?” Dennis asked. “Probably. But I’m actually going back to the XYZ Dimension.” Yuri explained. “Ooooh! Interesting! Well, I’ll see you around!” Dennis says, waving goodbye. Dennis… You’re the only one around here who’s fun. You’re just as crazy as me!
Yuri is then seen chasing Ruri. I’m not gonna write

this all out, because this scene played out in Ruri's origins episode.
We then see Yuri chasing after Rin. "Ohhh no! You seem to be cornered!" Yuri remarked with a creepy grin. He could see the fear in her eyes as he stared at her. 'How about you make things easy for me and come willingly?' Yuri offered. "Absolutely not!" Rin yelled, activating her duel disk. Yuri activated his in response.
After the duel, Rin screams out, but Yuri quickly uses the sleeping gas to knock her out. He hoists Rin onto his shoulder. Two down, two to go! Ooooh! I'm getting excited! This is such a fun little hunting game! Yuri thought.
"Hey, you creep! What are you doing?" A voice yells, and Yuri turns to look. 'And who might you be?' Yuri asks. "I'm Yugo Damare! Now give Rin back!" Yugo yells. Yuri smiles and runs. After running for a bit, Yuri takes one last look at Yugo, and they lock eyes. He summons a portal that he jumps into before Yugo can catch up.
Yuri is then seen taking the unconscious Rin to a tower. "Good job, Yuri." The two guards say. Yuri dips his head, and turns to leave. Two more left to go… Although, it's more like one. The Standard Dimension piece… After all, my precious Serena is already here. Ohhh this will be fun!

104. The Final Sacrifice

Back in the present, Yuri's duel with Yuto and Yugo rages on. Still filled with hatred, Yuto and Yugo continue their onslaught. "Now go! Clear Wing Synchro Dragon, attack!" Yugo yells. "Sorry, but that won't work!" Yuri cackles, activating a trap in response.

The duel raged on, with Yuto and Yugo working together to bring down Yuri.

Once Yuto's turn came around, he figured out what to do. "I activate The Phantom Knights Rank-Up-Magic Launch to summon an XYZ monster that is one rank higher!" He explains. 'From the depth of Purgatory, dedicated to the restless souls with the song of revolution. Echo for eternity, and appear! Rank-Up, Xyz Evolution! Come forth, Rank 5! Dark Requiem XYZ Dragon!' Yuto declares. "I activate Dark Requiem's effect! By using one overlay unit, your Starving Venom Fusion Dragon's attack is reduced to 0, while Dark Requiem's attack points become what your Dragon's used to be!" Yuto tells Yuri. "What?" He asks, watching as Starving Venom Fusion Dragon's attack is reduced before his eyes. "Yeahhh! That's the spirit!" Yugo encourages.

Yuri is about to activate a counter trap, but Yuto stops him. “I use another overlay unit to special summon Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon with its effects negated!” He says, before Dark Requiem is destroyed. “Riiissse my mighty beast!” Dark Rebellion rises from the shadows. As much as Yuri would like to deny it, he is somewhat intimidated by Yuto and his edgy monsters.

‘I activate the trap card, Follow Wing! I equip this card onto Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon!’ Yugo declares. “Now it can’t be destroyed in battle!” Yuto smiled. “Thanks.” He said. “No problem!” Yugo said, giving him a thumbs up. “Now let’s defeat this creep and go home!” Yugo told him. Yuto nodded. “Right. Dark Rebellion XYZ Dragon! Attack Yuri’s Starving Venom Fusion Dragon! Mauling Mandible Charge!” Yuto yells. The attack of Dark Rebellion sends Yuri flying at the wall behind them. However, instead of going through it, he hits the wall hard, and falls to the ground.

Just then, as Yuto and Yugo win the duel, the rest of the Lancers emerge from the hall. “Yuto!” Ruri exclaimed with a smile on her face. Yuto looked behind, and he smiled back when he saw Ruri and the Lancers running toward him. She ran so fast that she knocked Yuto to the ground, but they didn’t care, as they were overcome with joy that they were

both still alive. Ruri looked down at her boyfriend who she had knocked over backwards. ‘I’m glad you’re okay.’ She said. “I am, too.” Yuto responded, cupping her cheek. “Oh! Sorry, I didn’t realize I had knocked you over!” She said, blushing. She got off of him, and held his hand to stand up together. “Hey.” Yuto said, brushing Ruri’s loose hairs out of her face and tucked them behind her ears. “Oh, thanks for that.” Ruri said. “Of course.” Yuto responded, gazing at her lovingly.

Meanwhile, Rin ran over to hug Yugo. “You should’ve seen what the girls and I did! We took down the Tyler Sisters! It was awesome!” Rin said with excitement. “I wish I was there. It sounds cool.” Yugo admitted.

Reiji explained to the group that he had taken down Leo Akaba. “Now that we are all regrouped, let’s head out to assist the rest of our comrades… Unless you want to surrender right now?” Reiji asked, glaring at his father. Leo shook his head. “Fine then. We’ll go fight the rest of your students until you all surrender.” Reiji told him defiantly.

‘That’s the Professor?’ Yuto asked. Ruri nodded. “So he’s the guy who ruined our lives…” Yuto said, narrowing his eyes at Leo. “Everything will be okay. The war will surely end once the rest of Duel Academy sees Leo being held hostage.” Ruri

reassured him.
Suddenly, Yuri's voice rang out in the hallway. "I won't let you get away with this!" He yelled, running toward Yuto with a limp. Yuto realized that Yuri had a knife in his hands, so he pushed Ruri to the side. "Yuto!" She gasped, looking up to see her boyfriend's hands holding Yuri's knife back. She noticed that Yuto was holding the knife by the blade, which was making his left hand start to bleed. Despite the pain, he didn't let go, as he knew that if he faltered for one second; Ruri would get hurt. Rin ran over and grabbed Ruri from behind Yuto, so that she would be safe.
While this was all happening, Alexis and her remaining Duel School came into the hall. "There you are!" She exclaimed. 'Is everything clear outside?' Reiji asked. She nodded. "They all surrendered. Word spread that the Professor was defeated." Alexis explained. She suddenly saw Yuto and Yuri fighting and gasped in shock.
After seeing Yuri suddenly attack Yuto, Shay, Kaito, and Serena leapt forward to protect Yuto, pushing Yuri backwards. This move made Yuri fall, but he managed to hang onto the knife. Yuto let go of the blade, but the force of Yuri falling backwards caused the knife to graze deeper into his skin.
Yuto gripped his left hand in pain, staring at the

deep, diagonal gash along his palm. He was shocked that Shay, Kaito, and Serena had saved him. Yuto looked behind him and saw that Ruri was safe, which gave him some relief.

Shay, Kaito, and Serena held Yuri down. Shay took the knife from Yuri's hands, and made it skid across the floor toward Yuto. "Take it, Yuto!" Shay called. Yuto bent down to pick up the knife, and could see the three Lancers staring at him. His eyes widened in shock. I have to kill him…? He realized. Yuto froze up, finding his dilemmas returned to plague his mind. He looked behind him at Ruri and the other Lancers. If I do this, they're going to think I'm just as bad as Duel Academy… Will Ruri forgive me for this? Yuto wondered, closing his eyes.

'What are you waiting for? Strike me down!' Yuri cackled. "He's right, Yuto. You have to end this. With Yuri dead, our last major threat will be eliminated, and this war will be over." Kaito told him. Yuto clenched his fist. Why am I hesitating? He wondered. But he knew why. It hurt Yuto to admit it, but he felt nervous about the thought of killing with so many people watching him. If I were alone, then I wouldn't hesitate to do this… He thought. "Yuto! Please, you have to end this for us!" Shay called to him. Yuto opened his eyes, and with trembling hands, he walked toward them.

As Yuto approached them, he noticed that his, Kaito, and Shay's hands were quite literally full of blood. This made him hesitate further. "Please…" Serena begged. 'I don't… "Yuto began." Yuto! If you don't do this, then Yuri will just keep resisting! You have no other choice!' Reiji called to him. "I know, but…" Yuto tried to say. "Hey, it's all good! We won't hold it against you!" Sylvio called out. "Yeah, we know you're a good person!" Yuzu agreed. They… Really think that? Yuto was stunned.

"What you're about to do… It may not be ideal, or even morally correct, but… You're doing this for the sake of all the dimensions! You're only doing this to protect everyone! And that's all you can do! This is the final sacrifice that has to be made before we can all go back to our normal lives. Isn't that what you want?" Ruri finally spoke up, her gaze meeting Yuto's. He felt a huge weight lift off of his shoulders knowing that his allies wouldn't hate him for what he was about to do. Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Ruri. I know that must've been hard for you to admit, knowing what you went through. Fine. I'm doing this just to end the war… Yuto thought about all the times he had suffered, how he wanted so badly for the war to end, and how he wanted to get his revenge. This will be the final time I will ever have to worry about these crossroads in my mind…!

Yuto raised and angled the knife in his right hand. “I’m sorry.” Yuri’s eyes widened in shock at those words. No one had ever apologized to him. He was stunned by how genuine Yuto’s words were. Yuri’s life flashed before his eyes before feeling a sharp, shooting pain in the lower base of his head. He felt himself fall to the ground, and suddenly couldn’t move. Yuri couldn’t feel himself draw air, and everything started closing in around him. Yuri was exhausted, but he was not in too much pain. He closed his eyes. “I’m sorry.” Those were the final words Yuri would ever hear.

The Lancers were stunned; not because they were upset with Yuto or anything, but they were surprised by how he chose to kill his opponent. Yuto gave Yuri a merciful death… One that was quick and as painless as possible with a knife… Yuzu realized. A stab to the back of the head, or the brain stem… That area of your brain is what controls your heart rate and breathing, so one stab to that, and you’re finished… Reiji thought.

The Lancers slowly approached Yuto. The XYZ soldier fell to his knees next to the body, dropping the knife. Shay and Kaito put their hands on each of their friend’s shoulders. “You did it.” Kaito said. “I’m proud of you.” Shay told him. Yuto’s expression was gloomy instead of triumphant. He

wished he could be happy, as he knew that now they could return home and rebuild. But he couldn't. Yuto saw that the blood on his two friend's hands left blood on his clothes, which made him feel worse.
'Yuto… "Yuto heard Ruri's voice from behind him, and turned to see her. She got down to his level, and he didn't hesitate to embrace her in his arms." Are you… Are you really okay with being with me, knowing that I've killed so many?' Yuto asked her. "Of course. I understand that circumstances are different during war. I know you, Yuto. I know you're a kind soul. I know that you often had no choice." Ruri told him. They both started to cry, and Yuto pulled his girlfriend tighter, wrapping his arms around her backside. This inadvertently got blood on her clothes. "Thank you." Yuto said to her, relieved that Ruri never lost faith in him.
"Now, there are a few things left we must do." Reiji announced. The Lancers turned to him and listened. 'Leo… You mentioned earlier that sealing people into cards was used to hopefully bring your daughter back because it contained the duelist's life force, right? So then… Would it stand to reason that those duelists aren't dead, and that there's a way to bring them back?' Reiji asked. Leo nodded. "There is a way. In the throne room… There's a large maze shaped contraption called the ARC-V Reactor. It

was what I was going to use to fuse the dimensions and the four girls into one… But there's a switch near the throne that deactivates it and restores everyone who was sealed into a card back to their physical forms." Leo explained. Everyone was shocked to hear this. Not only because of the fact that they could bring people back, but because a lot of the Lancers weren't present when Leo Akaba explained the backstory of the dimensions and the counterparts. However, they all felt that now wasn't the time for questions, as they were all far too eager to revive all those who were sealed into cards

The XYZ friends all started crying. "My family… They'll be alright…" Kaito realized, his voice trembling. "All of those innocents who were carded during the invasion will be…" Shay began. They all looked at each other with a smile on their faces. "They'll be brought back!" They all said in unison.

Sylvio's eyes widened at the news. "Crow, Gong, my father… They'll be okay…" He realized, clutching his crystalized pendant.

The episode ends with everyone in the throne room, gathering around the throne as Reiji prepares to activate the switch.

105. Harmony

The episode begins with Reiji using the switch. The ARC-V Reactor begins to glow with green light. Suddenly, balls of light come from out of the machine, and start appearing in the room. These balls of light slowly form into humans. “Look! It’s working!” Yuya realized, pointing at the first few people who were brought back. The bright light emitting from the human forms slowly dulled, revealing that it had been successful.

Kaito gasped, and saw his father and brother’s light forms slowly dull. He ran toward them. “Father! Haru!” He said, quickly embracing them. ‘Kaito… What happened? Where are we?’ Haru asked. Kaito ruffled his little brother’s hair affectionately. “You two were sealed into cards, but we’ve managed to bring everyone back.” He explained. “I’m so proud of you, Kaito.” His father said. “Who’s we?” Haru wondered. “The Resistance and the Lancers.” Kaito said, pointing to the group. Kaito’s father and Haru dipped their heads politely. “Thank you for what you’ve done.” They said. The Lancers’ hearts warmed seeing Kaito reunite with his family. All of the pain we suffered feels like it’s truly worth it,

now that the war is over and we can see people reunite… Yuzu thinks.
Sylvio desperately looked around the room, until he saw a light form slowly dull a few feet away from him. Slowly, the light emitting from the person dulled from the head down, revealing familiar tall, orange hair. Sylvio quickly ran over with his arms extended. “Croooow!” Sylvio shouted loudly, jumping into his boyfriend’s arms. They warmly embraced with tears in their eyes.
‘It’s nice to see you again.’ Crow said quietly. “I missed you so much! Please don’t ever leave me again! You know what I’ve been through!” Sylvio yelled at him. Crow’s face softened. “I won’t. I promise.” He said, and then pulled his boyfriend in for a sweet kiss. To feel him close to me again… This is truly a miracle! Sylvio thought.
Back with Yuya and Yuzu, they saw a tall light form dull in front of them. “Gong!” Yuya exclaimed, and he, Yuzu, and Gong had a group hug. ‘Gong! I’m so glad you’re back.’ Yuzu said. The trio of friends all cried together. “I’m sorry that I left you all behind.” Gong apologized. “Don’t be sorry! You did what you thought was right. You were true to yourself, weren’t you?” Yuya told him. True to… Myself. Gong thought, thinking back to his duel with Dennis, and how he firmly remained grounded and

defended his comrades. I was true to myself, and to my clan… Gong realized.
At the same time, more balls of light appeared throughout Duel Academy, and even throughout the four dimensions. We see a montage of people reuniting with their loved ones in every dimension. It's especially heartwarming to see the remaining XYZ survivors reuniting with their formerly carded friends and family. "How are you here? I thought we lost you!" Saya said, crying into someone's arms. 'I'm not sure what happened.' The person admitted. "All that matters is that you're here." Allen told them.
Back with Sylvio and Crow, Sylvio looks over his shoulder to see his father. "Dad!" Sylvio exclaims, and his father runs over to him. 'My boy! How are you here?' He asks. "I joined the Lancers to stop Duel Academy and get you back…" Sylvio explained. Furio seemed to notice a difference in his son; something that Sylvio had the courage to do, but he didn't. "Forgive me, Sylvio. I've been such a terrible father. I swear that I'll be better… And treat those around me better." Furio admitted. Sylvio hugged him as well.
Furio seemed to notice Crow awkwardly watching. "Who is this?" He asked. 'I'm his boyfriend.' Crow said. Sylvio was somewhat taken aback by Crow's

bluntness toward his father. “Oh… I see. It’s nice to meet you.” Furio said, shaking his hand. “It seems as though you helped my son get to this point, so… You have my blessing.” He told Crow. “Thanks, Mr. Sawatari!” Crow exclaimed. The three of them hugged, all becoming one family.

Meanwhile, Reiji is seen confronting his father. “Let your students go back home to their families.” He demanded. Leo nodded, and got on an intercom. He explained to them that the Lancers had won, and how due to their code of honor, that meant they had to leave and disband. We see a montage of students of all ages return to the harbor on ships, tearfully reuniting with their parents and loved ones.

‘And now… With you four.’ Reiji addressed Leo, the Tyler Sisters, and Commander Phoenix. “You four will rot in the Facility for what you’ve done.” Reiji told them. They all agreed to this. “Now, one last question… Is there an interdimensional portal that can return everyone to their respective dimensions?” Reiji asked. Leo nodded. “It’s behind the doors back there.” Leo pointed to a room behind the throne.

Reiji addressed the Lancers, declaring their victory, and called them over to the portal. He made an announcement on the intercom for all those who had been revived, and told them about what had

happened. “Now, you can all return home through the interdimensional portal.” Reiji declared. The throne room was filled with recently revived people, and even more were entering. Everyone was cheering and celebrating.

With a few people going at once, the Lancers let the revived people go through the portal first. After everyone had gone, Reiji addressed them again. “I guess this is goodbye. We will meet again soon, though.” Reiji said cryptically. ‘How?’ Yuya asked. “I’ll make an interdimensional bridge to cross the dimensions so that we can see each other.” Reiji promised. And with that, the Lancers, Resistance, and the four hostages went through the portal.

106. A New Era

After this, we get a timeskip of six months. We see that Reiji has completed his goal, as there is now a bridge between the dimensions. You may be wondering how the heck Reiji has the money to fund such a project, but it turns out that he used some of the prize money he got from the Friendship Cup to do it.

Reiji has also fired his mother from the company, and has legally adopted Riley so that she could be freed from their mother.

Since Riley now knows her place in the world and understands herself, she is seen enjoying life as a kid like she was supposed to. She goes to school, makes friends, and she and Reiji still bond. They often get ice cream together and take walks in the park to take pictures with Reiji's camera he got from the Lancers.

Due to Riley figuring out her self-worth and identity, this has further inspired Reiji to open up to others, and be more willing to show his emotions.

Claude has returned to Reiji's side, and the two form a legitimate friendship instead of just being workplace acquaintances.

The Yusho Duel School's name has been changed to the Pendulum Duel School. Similarly, the Standard Dimension is now known as the "Pendulum Dimension" after Yuya Sakaki. The Pendulum Duel School now has a larger student body, and has been funded by the Leo Corporation, so it has since gotten bigger as well. It now also teaches all the Summoning methods. Instead of branding itself as being the school established by the OG Dueltainer Yusho Sakaki, it rebrands itself to the school that has the OG Pendulum summoner, Yuya Sakaki.

Yuya has been visiting the Lancers often, especially his counterparts. He still dueltains, but not for the sake of entertaining others or because he feels forced to; but to use it as a way to get out his emotions and enjoy dueling. Yuya has also made up with his mother in regards to Yusho.

Yuzu and Serena have been living together in the Pendulum Dimension, since Serena doesn't have a home in the Fusion Dimension. They live together at Yuzu's house. Despite pushing Yuya to be with his daughter in the past, Syuzo was surprisingly fired up about his daughter having a girlfriend instead. Obviously, this was embarrassing for both Yuzu and Serena.

Yuzu has also reunited with Masumi, and the two are seen hanging out together. Yuzu explains to her

about where she had been, and all that had happened.

Gong has officially inherited his dojo, and has gained the respect of his father and clanmates. He is also seen befriending Kit Blade, the one who had inspired him to use Synchro summoning in his Superheavy Samurai deck.

We see Sylvio and Crow going on dates together, going back and forth between the Pendulum and Synchro Dimension. And yes, Crow finally got to cook Sylvio his five course meal.

In the XYZ Dimension, we see that quite a few buildings have actually been rebuilt. Houses, restaurants, hospitals, a therapy center, and the Spade & Clover Branch schools have been restored. Even the famous Heartland tower was rebuilt.

It is revealed that Reiji, Shay, and Yuto used their combined earnings from the Friendship Cup to rebuild Heartland together. This project is also funded by the Leo Corporation. With the help of the Leo Corporation and the citizens of the XYZ Dimension, they managed to rebuild at an astonishingly fast rate. Reiji has also used his technology from the Leo Corporation to clear up all the debris and even clean the air quality. While Heartland is currently more a town than a city, it’s certainly thriving.

We see the XYZ friends hanging out together like how they used to, and they seem to be going back to the Spade and Clover Branch. However, it is shown that the XYZ friends still have nightmares and flashbacks to the war, so they are all implied to be going to therapy on a regular basis. Despite this, they are all much happier together and in a better place than they were six months ago. Oh, and Yuto and Ruri are still together and happy.

In the Synchro Dimension, we see Yugo and Rin in the same house hanging out together. They continue to date.

We see that the Synchro Dimension has thrived under Jack Atlas' reign, and the Topsiders and Commoners are no more. Instead, the city has expanded to include the Commoners, and the economy has been changed so that all people start off with a specific amount of money. Classes no longer became relevant, as the Commoners now had the same opportunities as Topsiders, and began to slowly be a part of the flashy, expensive city life.

Crow's kids are taken care of by both him and Shinji. They switch off every few days.

We see the Professor, Tyler Sisters, and Aster locked up in the Facility.

In the Fusion Dimension, Duel Academy has been rebuilt and turned into a legitimate Duel School,

taught by none other than Alexis Tenjoin. She isn't the only teacher, of course, but she is by far the most beloved. Kids of all ages still sail to Duel Academy island and are taught actual lessons instead of how it used to be. What's really convenient is that since Duel Academy already had false advertising about being a legitimate Duel School, Alexis didn't have to change a thing, since the parents in the Fusion Dimension already believed that their kids were simply getting an education!

The episode ends with all the Lancers from the Synchro and XYZ Dimension getting on the bridge to cross into the Pendulum Dimension.

107. Reunion

The episode begins with the Lancers all reuniting together in Central Park. “Yuto, Yugo!” Yuya says, calling out to his counterparts. ‘Yuzu, Serena. How have you been?’ Ruri asks, with Rin next to her. “Crow!” Riley says, running up to him. “Nice to see you, kid.” Crow greets her.

After talking to each other for a bit, something appears to be different. “Hey, where’s big brother?” Riley asked. Everyone looked around, but Reiji wasn’t there. ‘Huh. Shay’s gone, too.’ Kaito commented. “He was just here earlier.” Yuto said, looking around.

Suddenly, they all hear a voice that says, “you were looking for us?” The Lancers turn to see Reiji and Shay posing dramatically next to each other. They appeared to be wearing cool shades and gold chains around their necks. Reiji pushed his glasses up his nose, and Shay gestured toward the helicopter they were on. ‘What are you looking at? Get in!’

After everyone got in, and the initial shock of seeing Reiji and Shay together like that wore off, they learned what was going on. “We’re all gonna go support Yuya in his match today. If he wins, he’ll be

an official pro duelist.” Reiji told them. “You got this, Yuya!” Yuzu and Gong encouraged. Everyone else cheered as well.
The helicopter landed in a grassy area, much to everyone’s surprise. “Wait, my match is being held here? Why?” Yuya asked. Everyone stepped off the helicopter. ‘Because Yuya, I am your opponent!’ Reiji revealed dramatically. Everyone was surprised. “Sweet! I’ve always wanted to beat you!” Yuya exclaimed. He and Reiji made their way to the center of the clearing, and the Lancers watched. “Ready? Duel!”
The duel takes up most of the episode.
“Hey, how has the XYZ Dimension been doing?” Yuzu asked Yuto. ‘It’s going well. We’ve managed to rebuild so much already.’ Yuto responded. “That’s great!” Yuzu said with a smile. “I just wanted to say, thank you for everything.” Yuzu said. “For what?” Yuto asked. “Well, if you hadn’t come into my life, then I never would’ve met you or any of the other Lancers.” Yuzu admitted. “Oh… Thank you. I don’t regret coming to the Pendulum Dimension either.” He said to her.
“It feels like such a long time ago.” Yuzu said. Yuto nodded. ‘Yeah, it really does. I’m glad things have changed. I’ll never stop being grateful for all that you and the Lancers have done.’ Yuto told her.

“Awww! You’re really kind, you know that?” Yuzu said playfully. Yuto looked at his hands. “That’s what people tell me.” He says. “Well, they’re right! What happened during the war doesn’t define you. The little interactions you have with others on a daily basis do. And you’re the sweetest guy I know.” Yuzu reassured him. Yuto’s face softened. “Well… I guess you’re right.”

“Kaito…” Kaito turned to see Shay behind him. He dramatically took off his shades, and the scene goes into slow-mo as Shay’s hair falls perfectly on his face. ‘Stunning.’ Kaito replied dryly. “I always needed shades, I could just never find ones that fit.” Shay admitted. “How tragic.” Kaito responded with a smile. “Heyyyy! I know you liked that!” Shay teased, playfully shoving Kaito. “You’re on, Obsidian!” Kaito said back, activating his duel disk. They begin to duel.

Meanwhile, Serena is having an arm wrestling contest with some of the Lancers. She has just beaten Rin and Yugo. “Jeez, how are you so strong?” Yugo asked after losing. Serena flexed her muscles in front of his face, rolling her sleeves up. ‘Talk to this!’ She exclaimed. “How are you more muscly than anyone else I know?” Yugo asked. Ruri giggled at this. “Hey, what’s so funny?” Yugo asked. “Forgive me, but your choice of words is just

funny.” Ruri said. “Huh?” Yugo wondered, scratching his head.

Gong and Riley are seen together as well. Gong updates Riley on how he inherited his dojo. “Can I come over sometime?” Riley asked. He nodded. ‘Of course, kid.’ Gong replied. She closed her eyes and smiled. “Thanks, Gong!”

At the same time, Crow and Sylvio are holding hands. “How are the kids?” Sylvio asked. ‘They’re as busy as ever. I think they think you’re another parent.’ Crow said in amusement. “Really?” Sylvio asked. Crow nodded. “But… Isn’t that weird? I mean, they used to see you and Shinji as their parents, but if they see me as a parent now, then…” Sylvio tried to explain. “It’s alright. They know we’re together… And I spend more time with them than Shinji does anyway.” Crow reassured his boyfriend. “Oh… Well in that case… I’m a dad!” Sylvio exclaimed with excitement.

Back to the duel, Reiji and Yuya are at a stalemate. Suddenly, they turn to see crowds of people gathering. It isn’t even just those from the Pendulum Dimension, but people from across all the dimensions. “Masumi! Kit!” Gong waved. “Saya and Allen are here!” Ruri realized. So many familiar faces from across all the dimensions have come to not only support Yuya, but to see their friends and

family. This made both Reiji and Yuya happy.
Later, we see Shay beat Kaito. “You’re finally catching up.” Kaito teased. ‘Yeah!’ Shay said with excitement. “Yo Shay.” Serena called him over. “I got a challenge for you!” She said.
Eventually, we see Yuya manage to beat Reiji in a close fight. Reiji smiles as he loses, and the crowd cheers. “I did it! I actually beat Reiji! I’m a pro!” Yuya declared. Reiji got up, and called the Lancers to the center with him and Yuya. “Yuya Sakaki, you are now officially in the Pendulum Dimension’s pro leagues!” Reiji announced. Everyone cheered again. The Lancers crowded around Reiji and Yuya, especially their counterparts.
Yuya turned to Yuto and Yugo, who were smiling at him; and Yuzu and her counterparts cheering for him. I’ve really done it… Thank you guys… Thank you all! He thought. Yuya dashed out between the crowd of the Lancers. “Thank you all for your support!” He said, with a skip in his step. “Yuya! Wait!” Yuzu and the other counterparts called, running after him. Eventually, all the Lancers chased him around the clearing full of people, who couldn’t help but be amused at this sight.
“Thank you, everyone!” Yuya yelled out, and the camera freezes on this scene, of Yuya jumping in midair with crowds around him; and the Lancers

following closely behind. The frozen scene then turns to a painting style, and the screen fades to black. Credits roll, and that’s the end of my Yugioh Arc-V Rewrite.

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